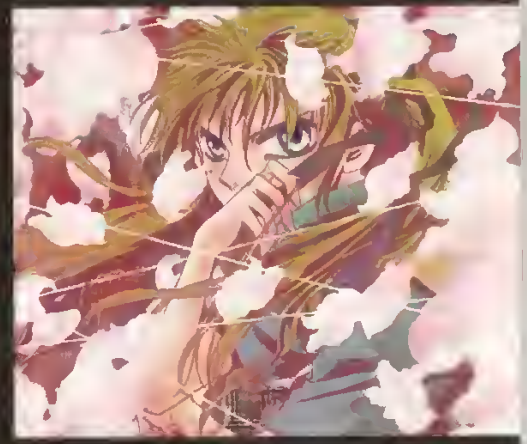
3
Bound Beauty
MICK TAKEUCHI

THE SOUL go!comi OF MANGA

Round Beauty

Chiyako and her companions are summoned to see the infamous "Head of the Family" – someone whose hatred for Chiyako's precious sensei runs so deep that what starts as a routine visit quickly turns into something far more dangerous...



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HER MAJESTY'S DOG

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Round Beauty

3

Round Beauty

STORY AND ART BY
MICK TAKEUCHI

VOLUME 3

go!comi

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A Go! Comi manga

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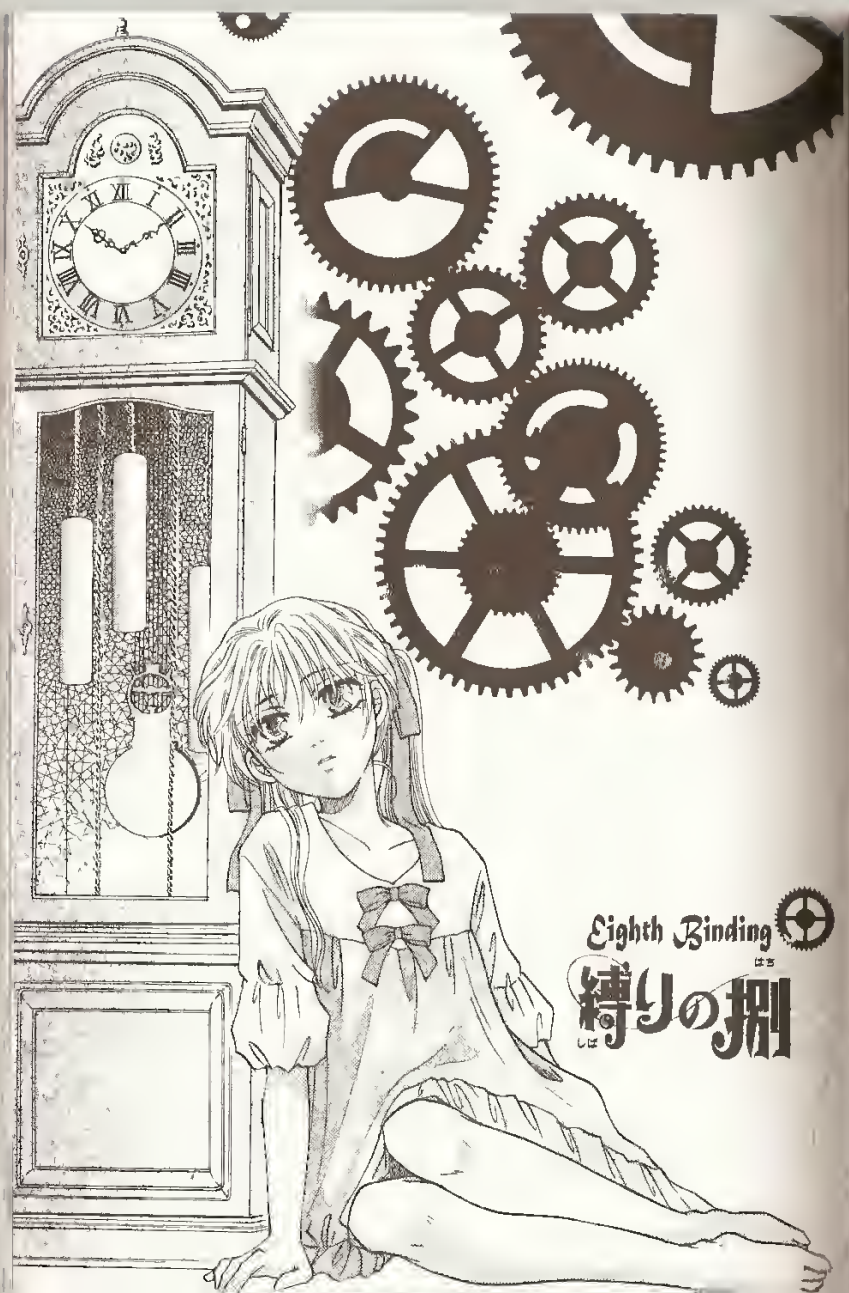

Eighth Binding

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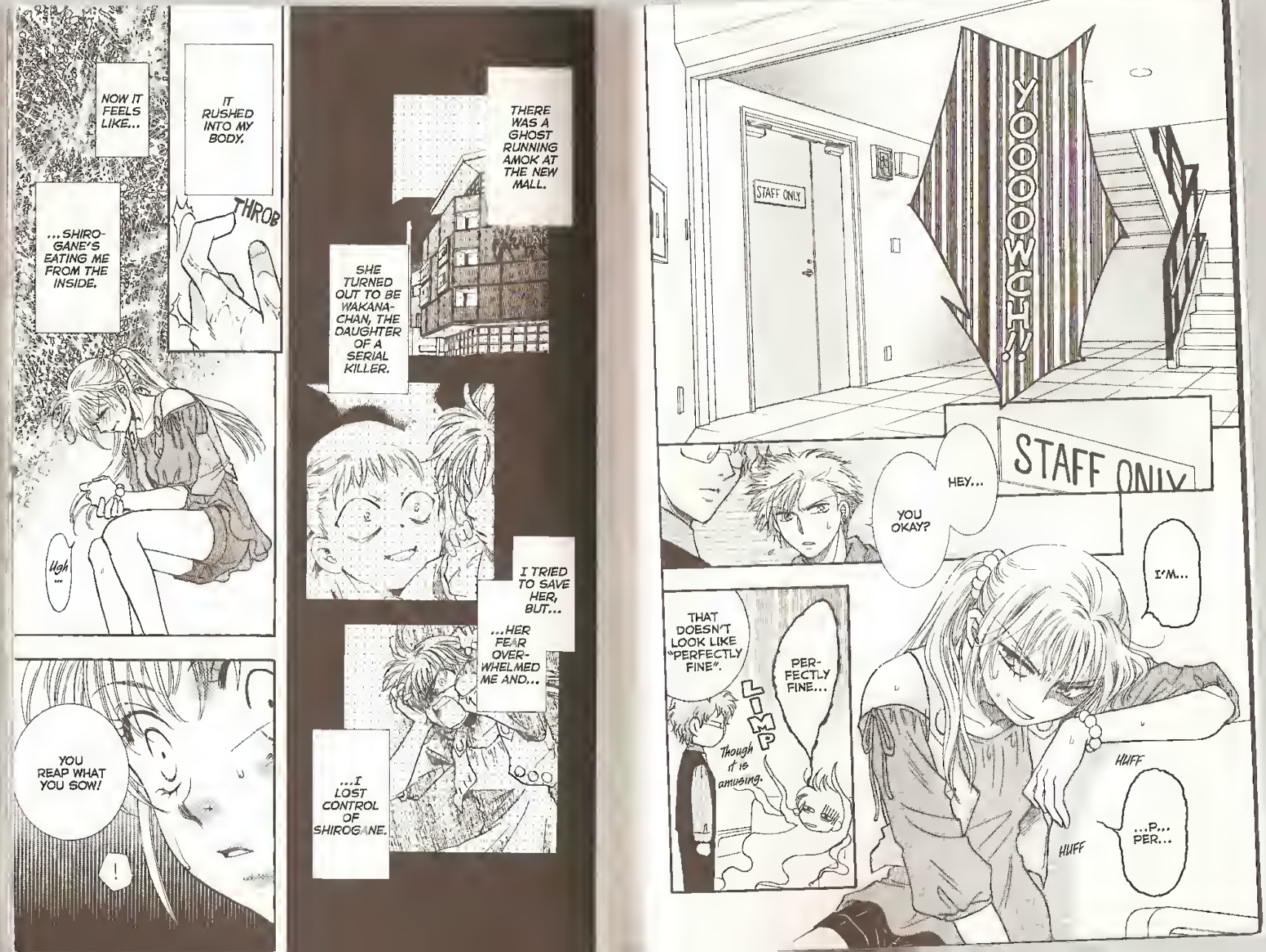
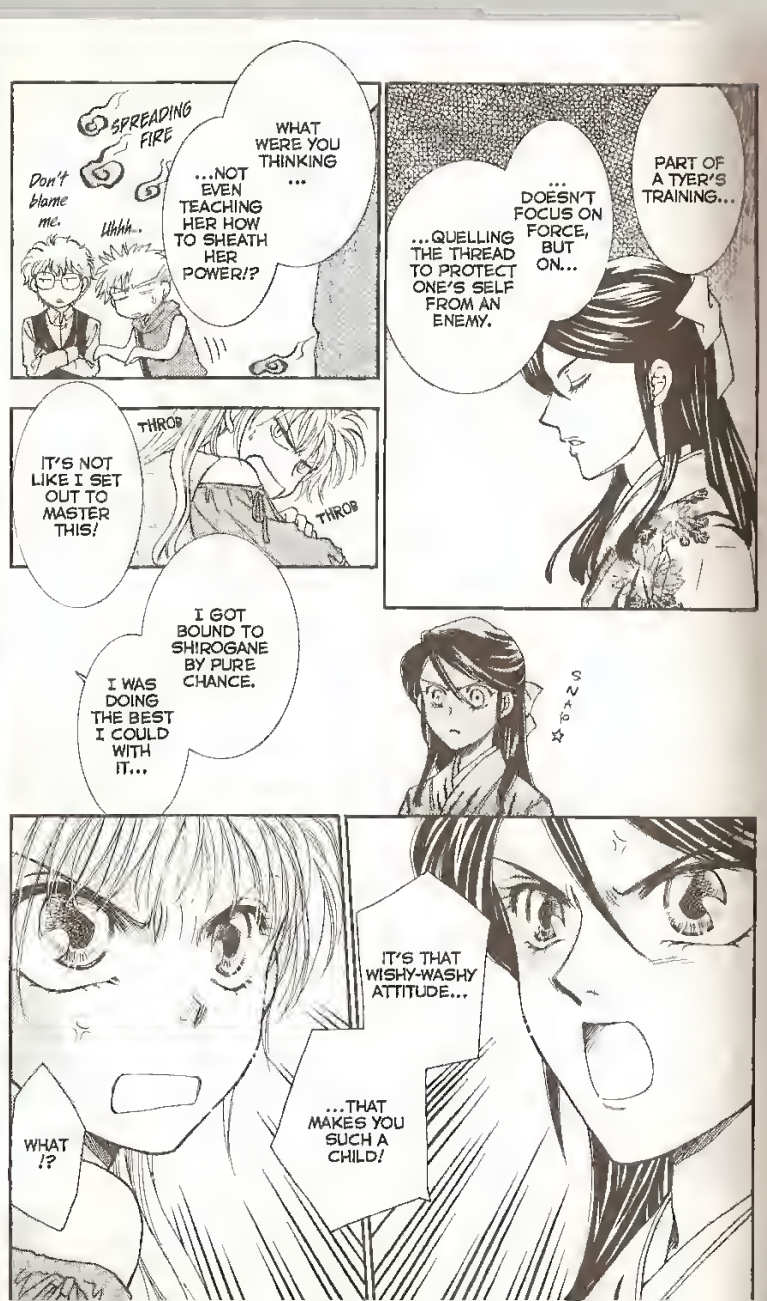
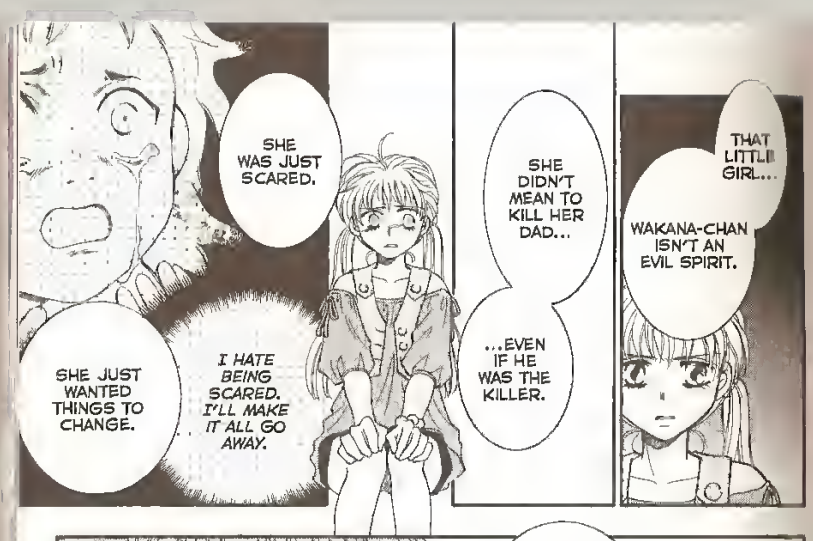
OUR STORY SO FAR

High school girl Chiko has the power to see the mystical red threads that coonect lovers. This leads to her being bound by contract to Shirogane, one of the five colored threeds that harbor mysterious powers. In return for this power, she is trapped in the body of a child. Forced to join the hot band of Onmyoji called the Tyers, she must learn to control her power while seeing the world in a whole new wey. When they visit a new shopping mall to calm a vengeful spirit, Chiko loses control of Shirogane, and must now suffer the consequences of a very angry end rebellious thread!


NOW IT FEELS LIKE...
IT RUSHED INTO MY BODY.
THROB
...SHIRO-GANE'S EATING ME FROM THE INSIDE.
Ugh...
YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW!
!
THERE WAS A GHOST RUNNING AMOK AT THE NEW MALL.
SHE TURNED OUT TO BE WAKANA-CHAN, THE DAUGHTER OF A SERIAL KILLER.
I TRIED TO SAVE HER, BUT...
...HER FEAR OVER-WHELMED ME AND...
...I LOST CONTROL OF SHIROGANE.
YOOOOWCH!!
STAFF ONLY
STAFF ONLY
HEY... YOU OKAY?
I'M...
THAT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE "PERFECTLY FINE".
PER-FECTLY FINE...
LIMP
Though it is amusing.
HUFF
HUFF
...P... PER...

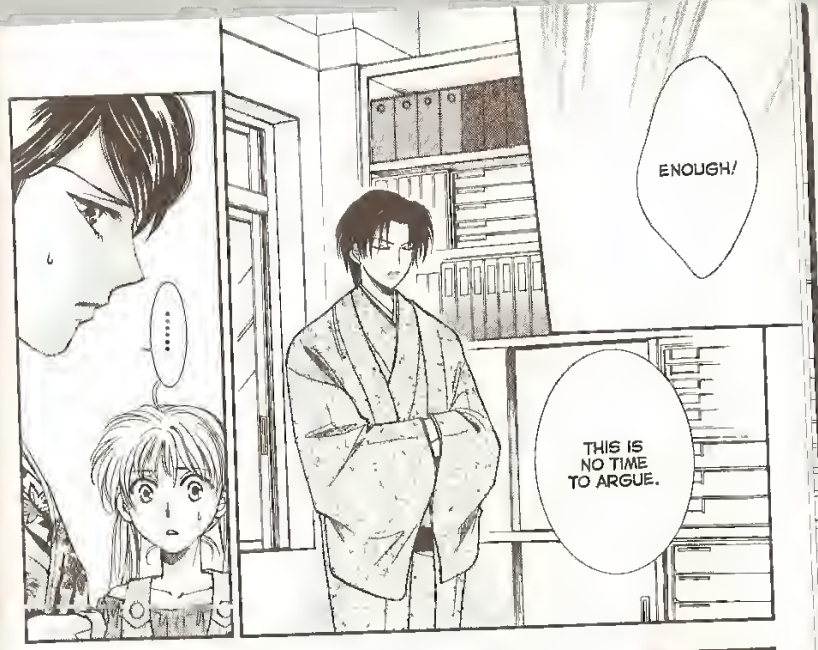

SPREADING FIRE
Don't blame me.
Uhhh...
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING ...
...NOT EVEN TEACHING HER HOW TO SHEATH HER POWER!?
PART OF A TYER'S TRAINING...
... DOESN'T FOCUS ON FORCE, BUT ON...
...QUELLING THE THREAD TO PROTECT ONE'S SELF FROM AN ENEMY.
THROB
THROB
IT'S NOT LIKE I SET OUT TO MASTER THIS!
I GOT BOUND TO SHIROGANE BY PURE CHANCE.
I WAS DOING THE BEST I COULD WITH IT...
SNAP
IT'S THAT WISHY-WASHY ATTITUDE...
...THAT MAKES YOU SUCH A CHILD!
WHAT !?

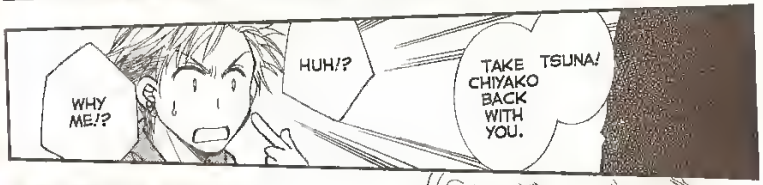
IF THE SPIRIT IS STRONG ENOUGH, AND YOU LOSE CONTROL ...
...ITS POWER CAN TRIPLE, AND COME RIGHT BACK AT THE SPINNER.
THE FIVE COLORED THREADS ALSO ACT AS SPIRITUAL AMPLIFIERS.
LOSING FOCUS IN THE MIDST OF TYING...
...IS AS FOOLISH AS TURNING A KNIFE ON YOURSELF!
.....
HOW?
HUH?
BUT THE FACT THAT CHIKO'S BODY HASN'T REVERTED ...
... MEANS THAT SHE'S STILL ACTIVATING IT, RIGHT?
THAT DOES IT!
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO RECONCILE HER COLORED THREAD!?
COULDN'T WE JUST PUT IT BACK?


SHE WAS JUST SCARED.
SHE JUST WANTED THINGS TO CHANGE.
I HATE BEING SCARED. I'LL MAKE IT ALL GO AWAY.
SHE DIDN'T MEAN TO KILL HER DAD...
...EVEN IF HE WAS THE KILLER.
THAT LITTLE GIRL...
WAKANA-CHAN ISN'T AN EVIL SPIRIT.

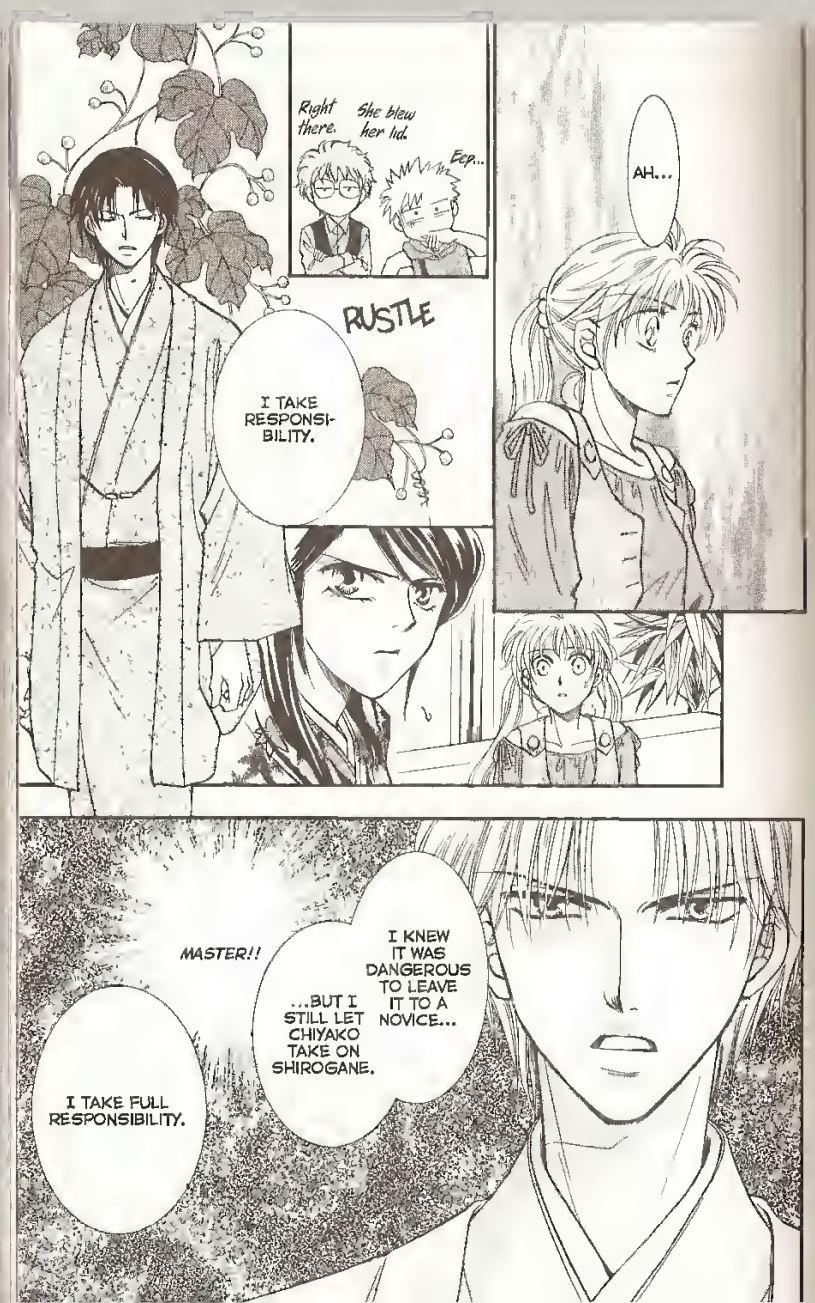
!
THAT MAKES HER AN EVIL SPIRIT!

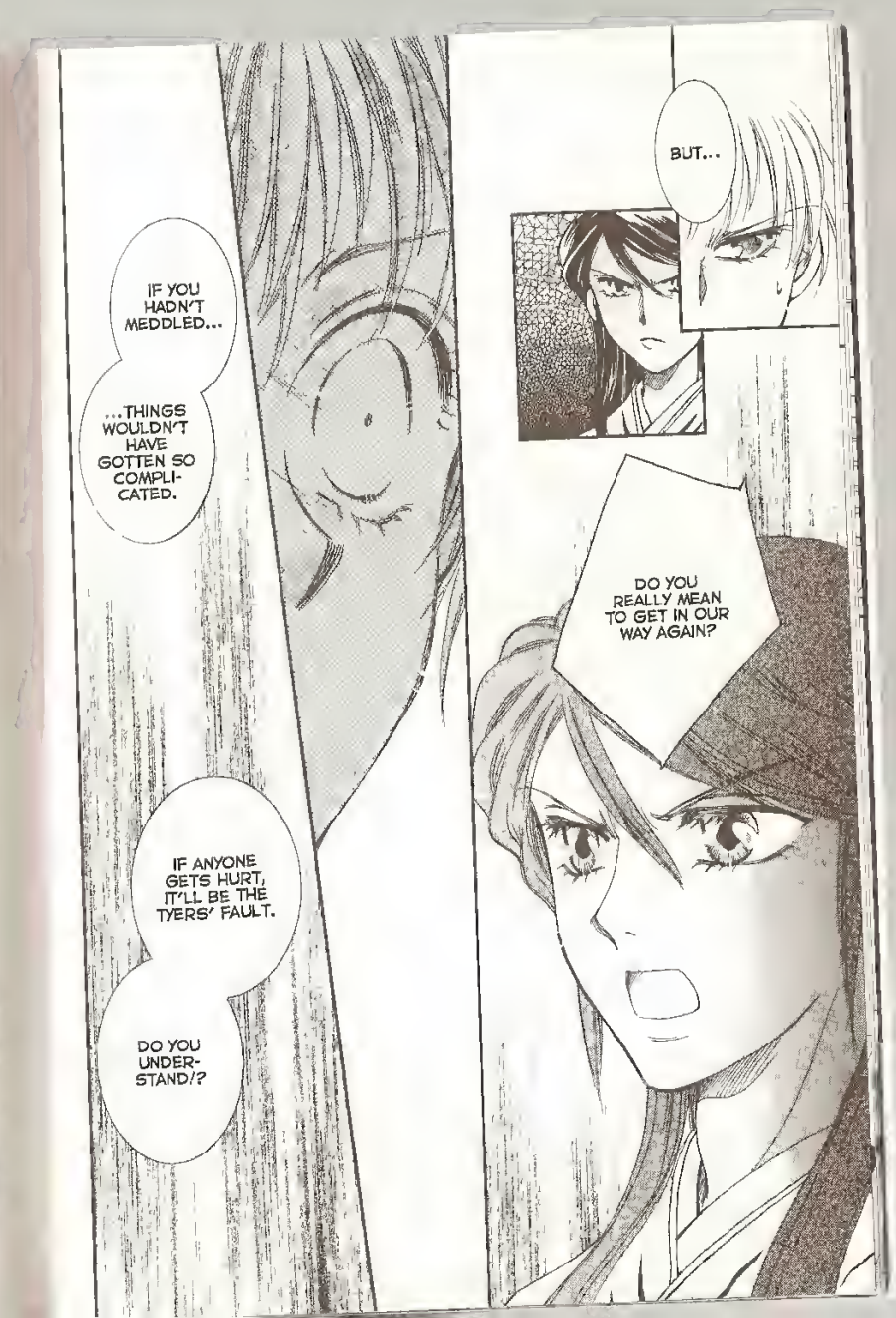
UNABLE TO EMBRACE HER TRUE STATE...
...SHE SURVIVES ON MADNESS AND FEAR.
THERE'S NO POINT IN TALKING TO HER.
BUT THAT GIRL IS NOT TIED TO THIS WORLD.
HOW CAN SHE BE, WHEN SHE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW SHE'S DEAD?
NORMALLY, TO EXORCISE A SPIRIT...
...IT'S BEST TO SEVER ITS LINGERING TIES.


.....
ENOUGH!
THIS IS NO TIME TO ARGUE.


WHY ME!?
HUH!?
TAKE TSUNA! CHIYAKO BACK WITH YOU.

AKEO-SAN'S SHOWER OF FIRE ... SHOULD HAVE WEAKENED HER.
UNLESS IT JUST MADE HER ANGRIER.
HE'S RIGHT.
WE HAVE TO SETTLE THINGS WITH THAT EVIL SPIRIT.

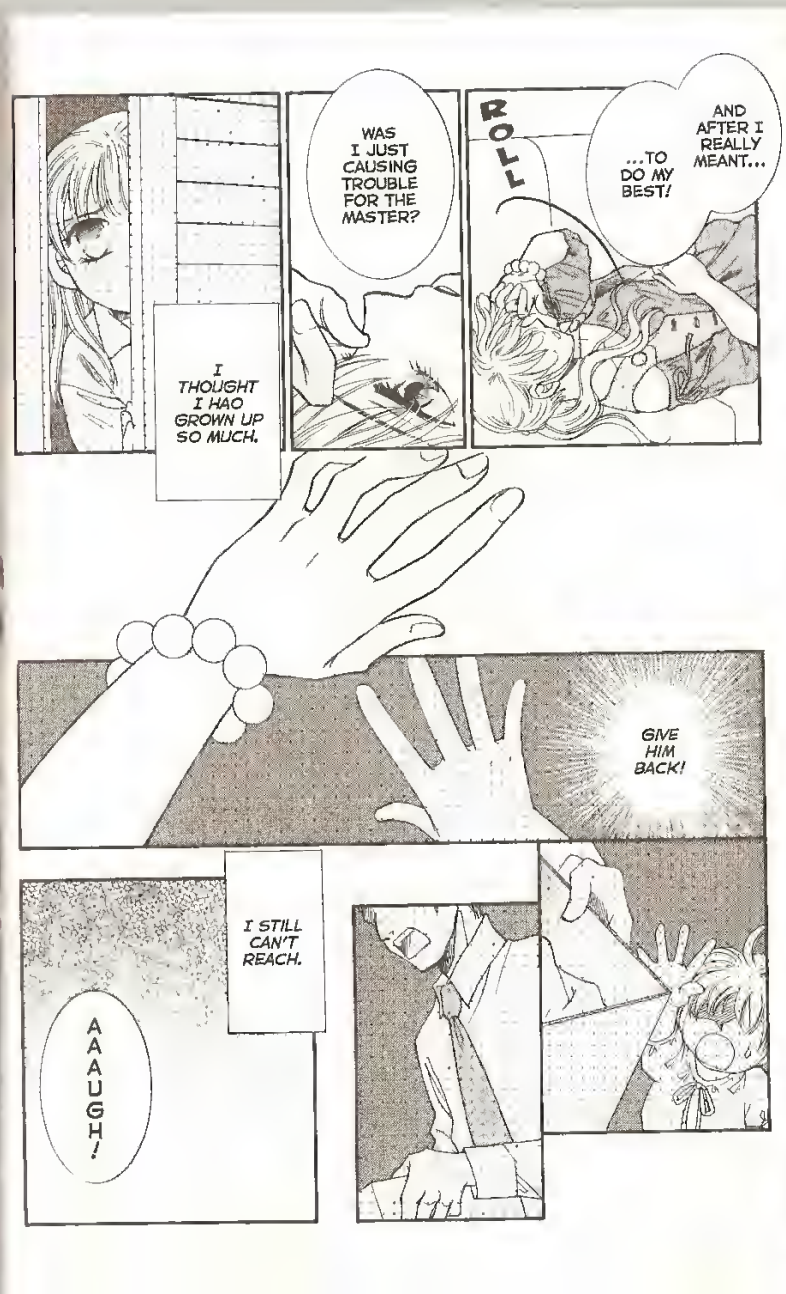

Right there.
She blew her lid.
Eep...
RUSTLE
I TAKE RESPONSI-BILITY.
AH...
MASTER!!
I KNEW IT WAS DANGEROUS TO LEAVE IT TO A NOVICE...
...BUT I STILL LET CHIYAKO TAKE ON SHIROGANE.
I TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY.

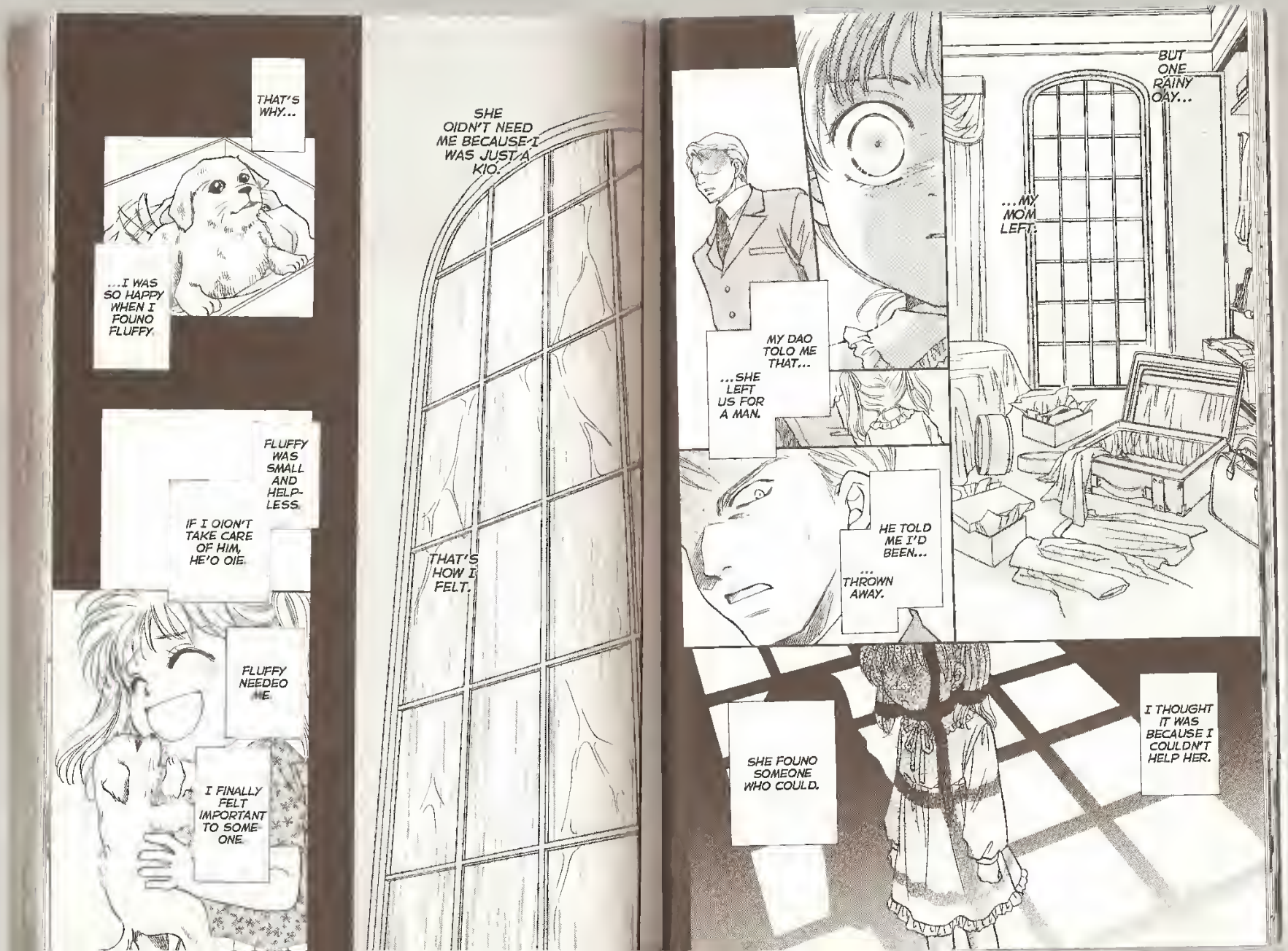

BUT...
IF YOU HADN'T MEDDLED...
...THINGS WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN SO COMPLI-CATED.
DO YOU REALLY MEAN TO GET IN OUR WAY AGAIN?
IF ANYONE GETS HURT, IT'LL BE THE TYERS' FAULT.
DO YOU UNDER-STAND!?

.....
SHUT
EVERY-ONE...
GOOD LUCK WITH THE CASE.
POOMF
...JUST GETTING IN THE WAY?
AM I REALLY...

I CAN'T LET THE MASTER TAKE ALL THE BLAME!
W...WAIT!
YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG, MASTER! I'M THE ONE WHO-
CLATTER
DON'T WORRY. I'LL STAY PUT HERE.
THROB
...BE GOOD.
I'LL...
FINE.

I WISH...
...I WAS AN ADULT!
I WANTED TO GROW UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
IF I WAS BIGGER I COULD'VE PROTECTED MY MOM.
FROM MY DAD'S HAND.
FROM ALL THE MEAN STUFF OUTSIDE.


I THOUGHT I HAD GROWN UP SO MUCH.
WAS I JUST CAUSING TROUBLE FOR THE MASTER?
ROLL
...TO DO MY BEST!
AND AFTER I REALLY MEANT...
GIVE HIM BACK!
I STILL CAN'T REACH.
AAAUGH!

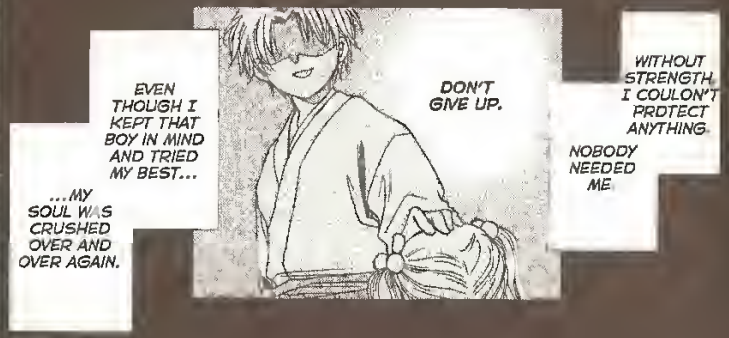

THAT'S WHY...
...I WAS SO HAPPY WHEN I FOUNO FLUFFY.
FLUFFY WAS SMALL AND HELP-LESS.
IF I OION'T TAKE CARE OF HIM, HE'O OIE.
FLUFFY NEEDEO ME.
I FINALLY FELT IMPORTANT TO SOME ONE.
SHE OIDN'T NEED ME BECAUSE I WAS JUST A KIO.
THAT'S HOW I FELT.
BUT ONE RAINY OAY...
...MY MOM LEFT.
MY DAO TOLO ME THAT...
...SHE LEFT US FOR A MAN.
HE TOLD ME I'D BEEN...
... THROWN AWAY.
I THOUGHT IT WAS BECAUSE I COULDN'T HELP HER.
SHE FOUNO SOMEONE WHO COULD.

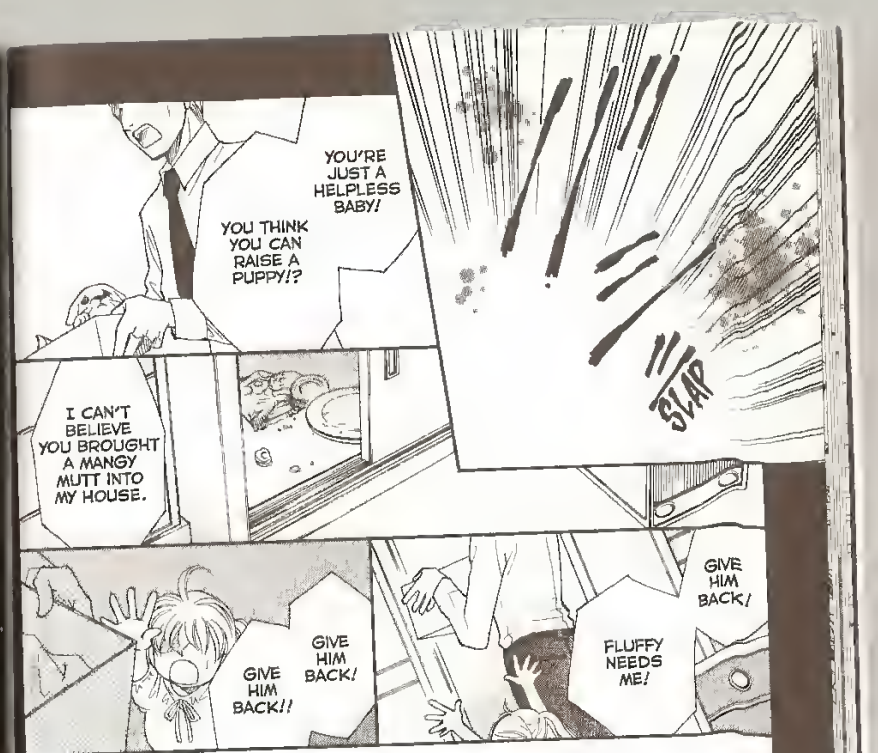
I REALIZED HOW POWERLESS I WAS.

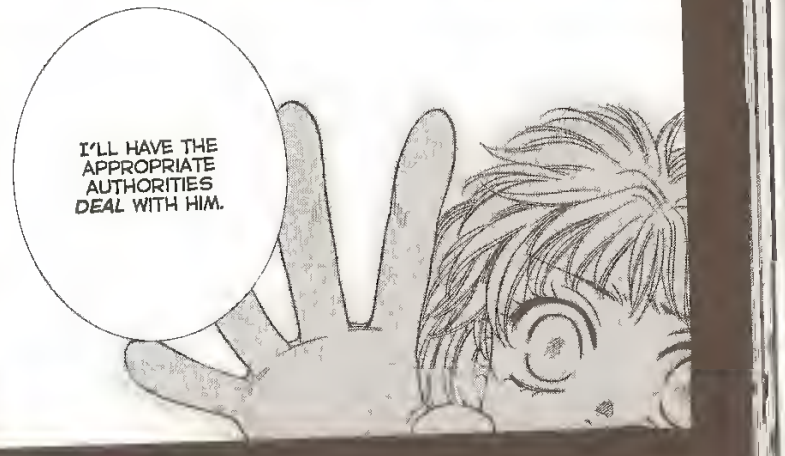
THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T PROTECT FLUFFY.

MY HANDS WERE TOO WEAK.

I WAS TOO SMALL.


EVEN THOUGH I KEPT THAT BOY IN MIND AND TRIED MY BEST...
...MY SOUL WAS CRUSHED OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
DON'T GIVE UP.
WITHOUT STRENGTH, I COULDN'T PROTECT ANYTHING.
NOBODY NEEDED ME.

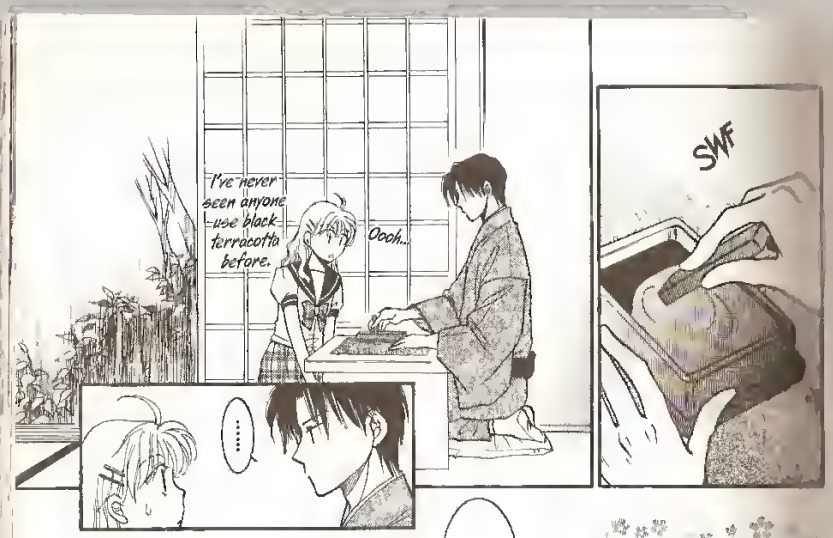

YOU'RE JUST A HELPLESS BABY!
YOU THINK YOU CAN RAISE A PUPPY!?
SLAP
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU BROUGHT A MANGY MUTT INTO MY HOUSE.
GIVE HIM BACK!!
GIVE HIM BACK!
FLUFFY NEEDS ME!
GIVE HIM BACK!

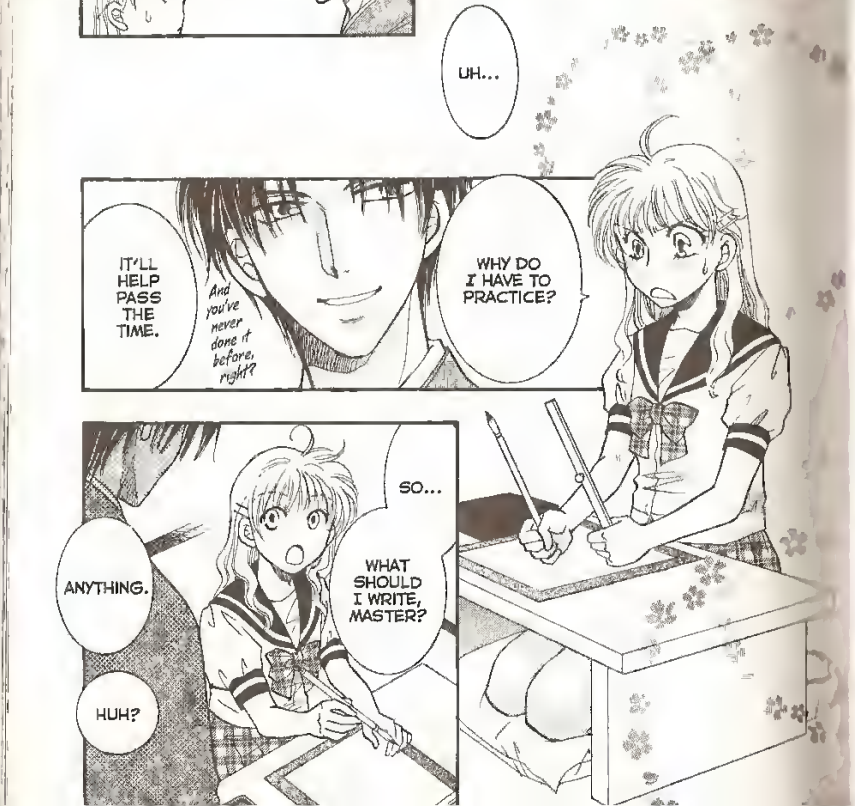


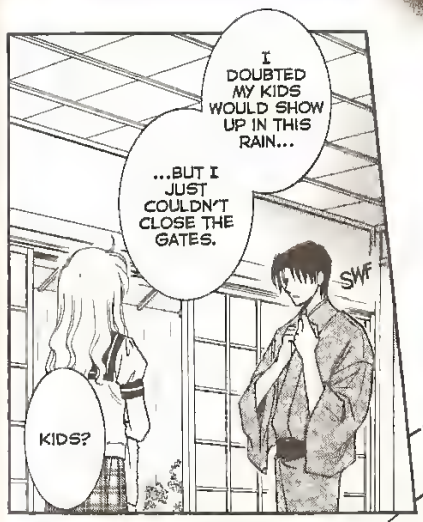
OH!
SORRY, I WAS JUST TRYING TO GET OUT OF THE...
THAT MUST BE WHOEVER LIVES HERE!
... RAIN ...
IS SOME-BODY THERE?
SPLISH
...I MET THE MASTER.

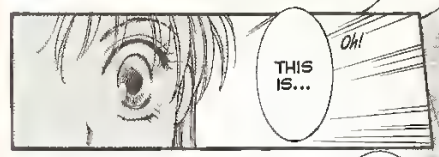
SSSSHHH
AND THEN ONE DAY...
UGH, YOU'RE KIDDING ME!!
IT'S POURING AND I FORGOT MY UMBRELLA!
POP
GUESS I'LL CALL SOMEONE FOR A RIDE.
I've got no other choice.
16:37
EVEN THOUGH I HAD A WHILE BEFORE CURFEW...
...I DIDN'T WANT TO GO HOME.

...I WAS SUCH AN IDIOT.
LOOKING BACK ON IT...
はしゃぎ
SPLASH!!
BOW
BOW
Thanks for the towel!
AND I IMPOSED ON YOU BECAUSE OF THE RAIN...
I GOT YOU DRIPPING WET.
I'M REEEALLY SORRY!
THE BOY WITH THE READ THREAD ...
...WHO SAVED ME FROM THE FIRE!
DASH
IT'S HIM!
FLASH
LUNGE
I MISSED YOUUUUU!!
SLIP


I've never seen anyone use black terracotta before.
Oooh..
.....
SWF

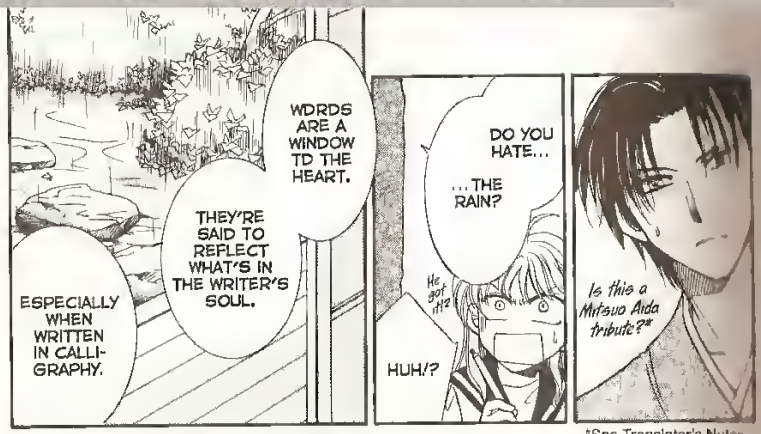

UH...
IT'LL HELP PASS THE TIME.
And you've never done it before, right?
WHY DO I HAVE TO PRACTICE?
SO...
WHAT SHOULD I WRITE, MASTER?
ANYTHING.
HUH?


I DOUBTED MY KIDS WOULD SHOW UP IN THIS RAIN...
...BUT I JUST COULDN'T CLOSE THE GATES.
SWF
KIDS?

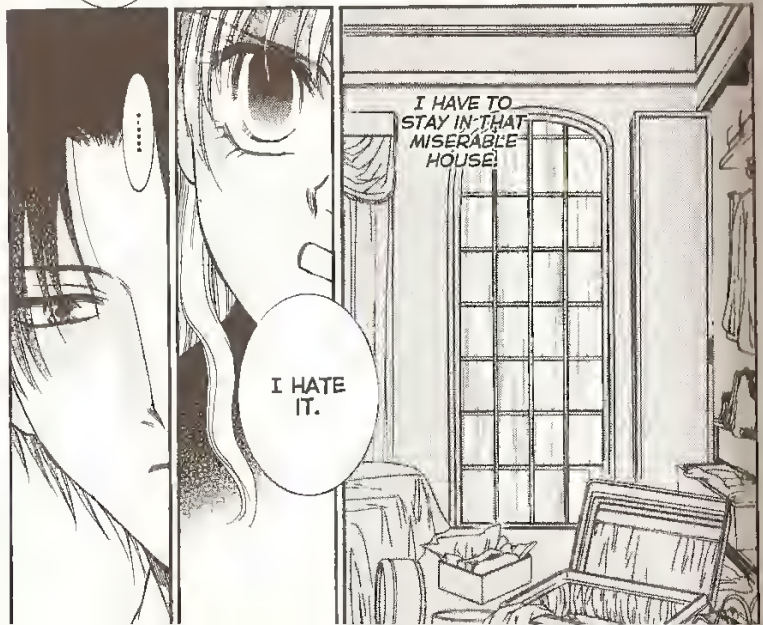

Oh!
THIS IS...

...A CALLI-GRAPHY STUDIO?
I JUST WATCH THE CHILDREN PRACTICE.
IT'S NOT A STRICT CURRICULUM.

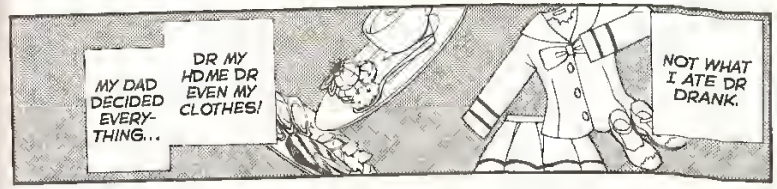
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
Had to get changed


WORDS ARE A WINDOW TO THE HEART.
THEY'RE SAID TO REFLECT WHAT'S IN THE WRITER'S SOUL.
ESPECIALLY WHEN WRITTEN IN CALLI-GRAPHY.
DO YOU HATE...
...THE RAIN?
He got it?
HUH!?
Is this a Mitsuo Aida tribute?*

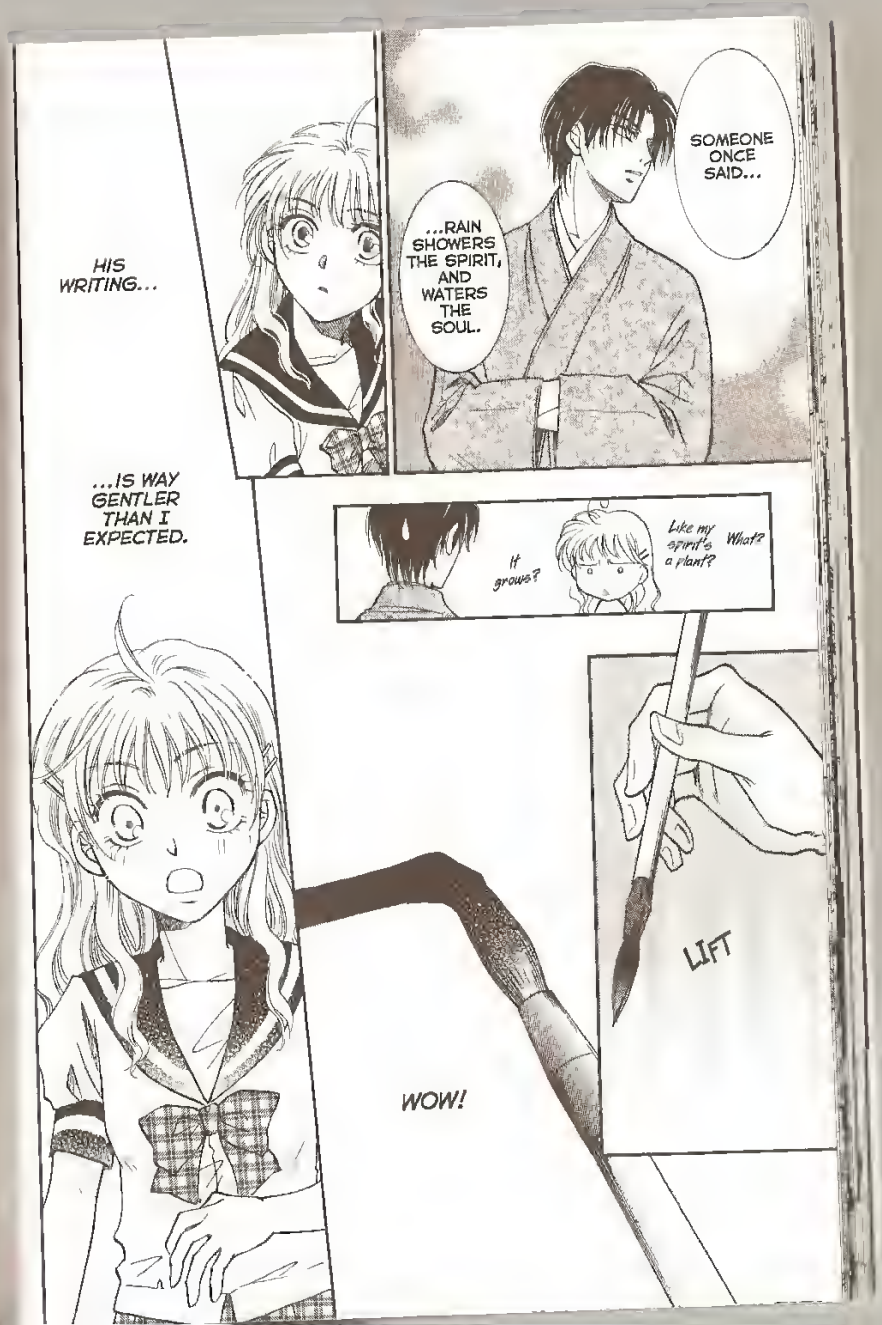
*See Translator's Notes



I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO CHOOSE FOR MYSELF.
WHATEVER I LIKE, HUH?
Maybe my motto?
Or a favorite phrase?
Whaaaat?
YOU MEAN THERE'S NO GUIDE-LINES?
WRITE WHAT-EVER YOU LIKE.

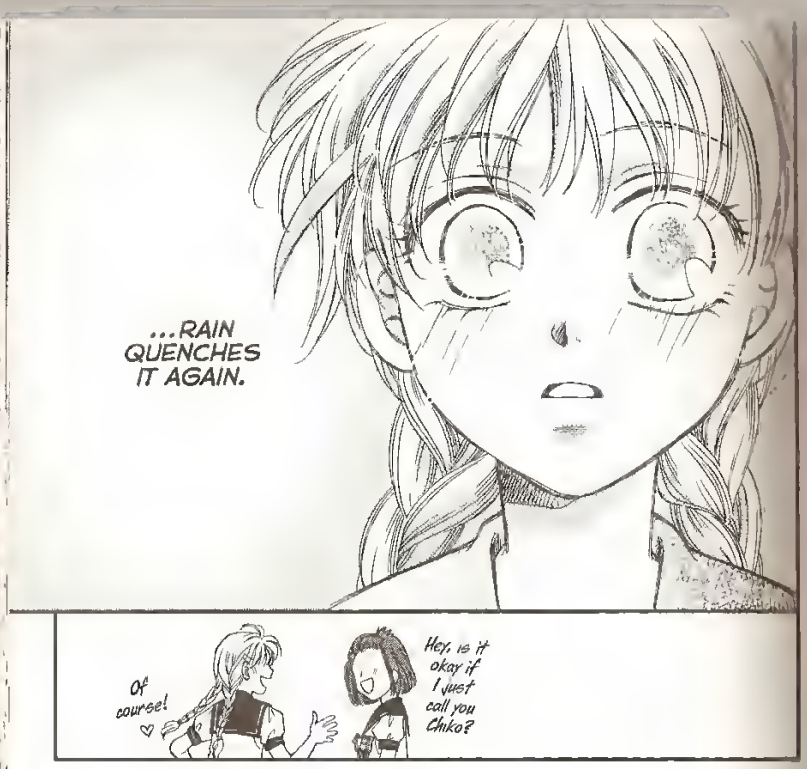


夏雨ト
SEE? SUMMER RAIN...
...SHOWERS THE SPIRIT.
AND WATERS THE SOUL.
FOR SUCH A BIG...
...AND MASCULINE HAND...
...THE CHARACTERS SPILL FROM HIS BRUSH SO SERENELY.
OH, TO BE BIG...

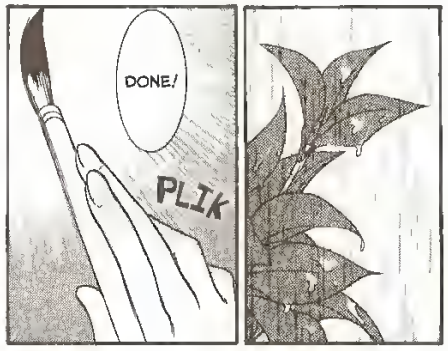

SOMEONE ONCE SAID...
...RAIN SHOWERS THE SPIRIT, AND WATERS THE SOUL.
HIS WRITING...
...IS WAY GENTLER THAN I EXPECTED.
It grows?
Like my spirit's a plant?
What?
LIFT
WOW!

I THOU... IT WA...
...JUST THE USUAL PRETENTIOUS STUFF ADULTS LOVE TO SPOUT.
AFTER ALL...
...I WAS NOT NECESSARY AT ALL.
COME ON!
YOU TOLD MY FORTUNE, REMEMBER?
HUH?
GOTO-SAN, THANK YOU!

IT QUENCHES THE DRY, CRACKED EARTH.
JUST AS RAIN ON A HOT SUMMER DAY BRINGS A COOL BREEZE...
...IT CAN HEAL A PERSON'S WOUNDED HEART.
EVEN IF YOU DON'T NEED IT...
...THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE WHO DOES.
IT CAN HEAL...
...A PERSON'S WOUNDED HEART.
EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD IS NECESSARY.

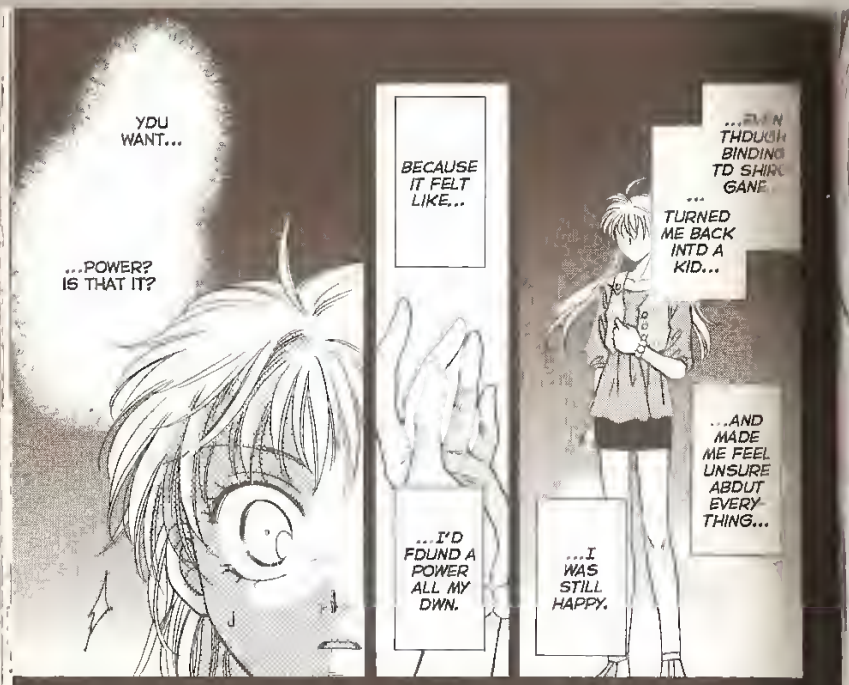


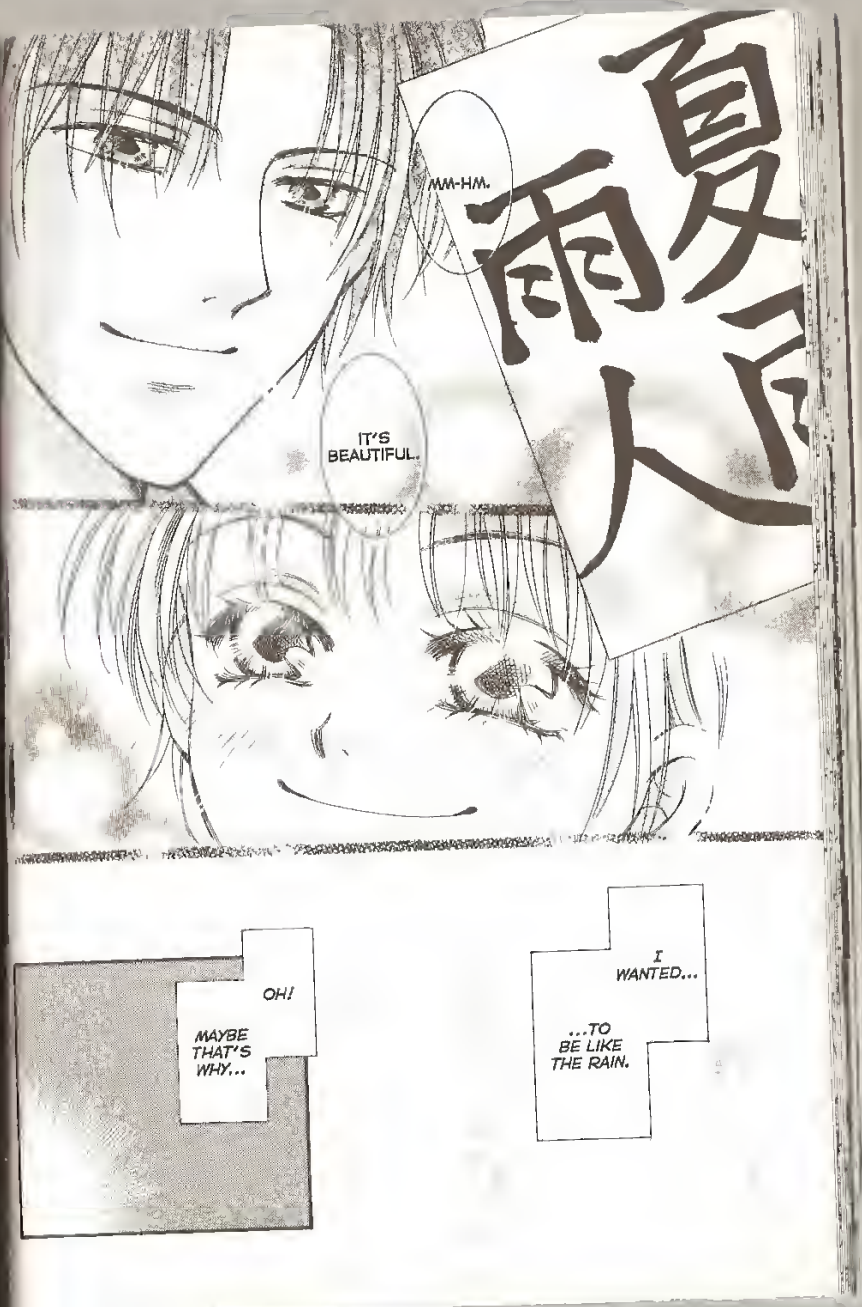
I FINALLY REALIZED...

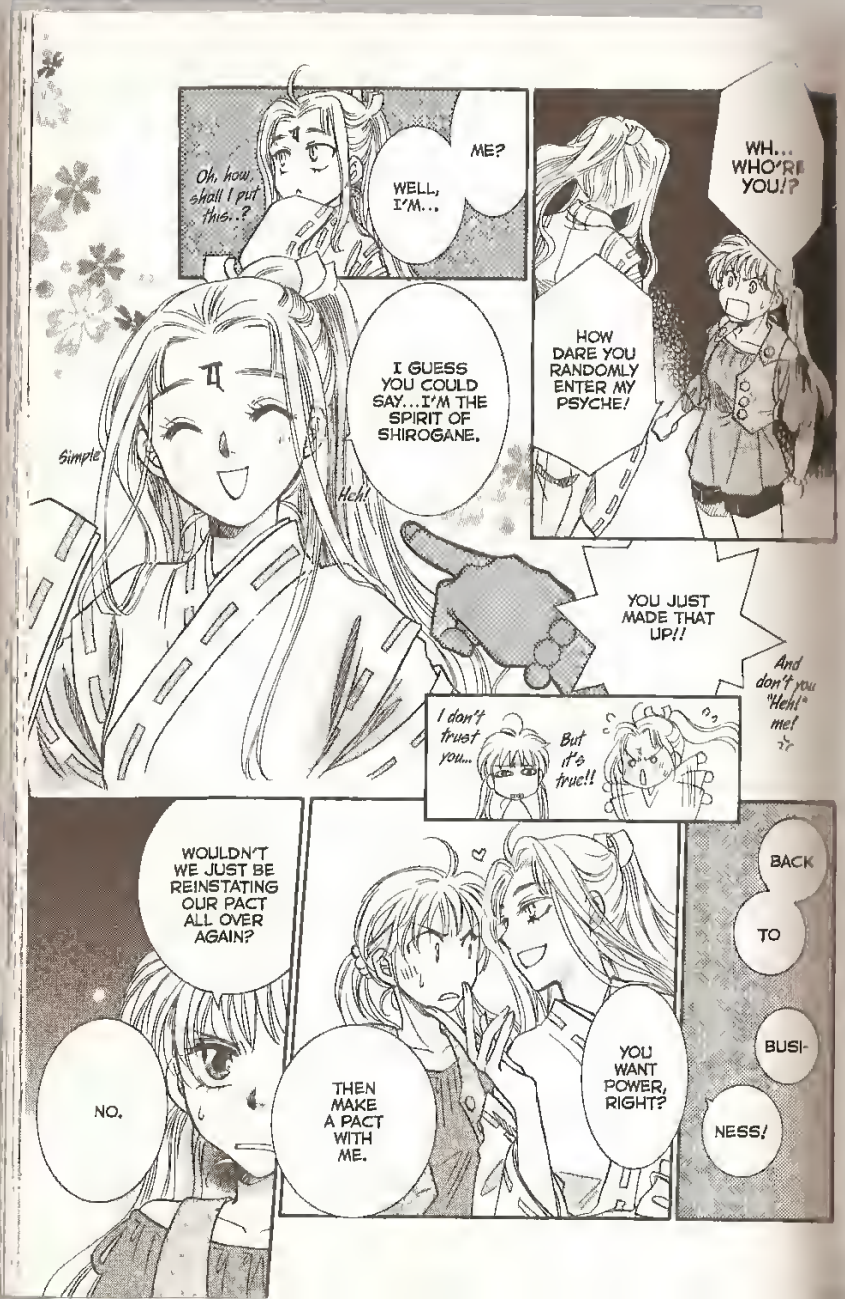


...I MIGHT ACTUALLY HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER.

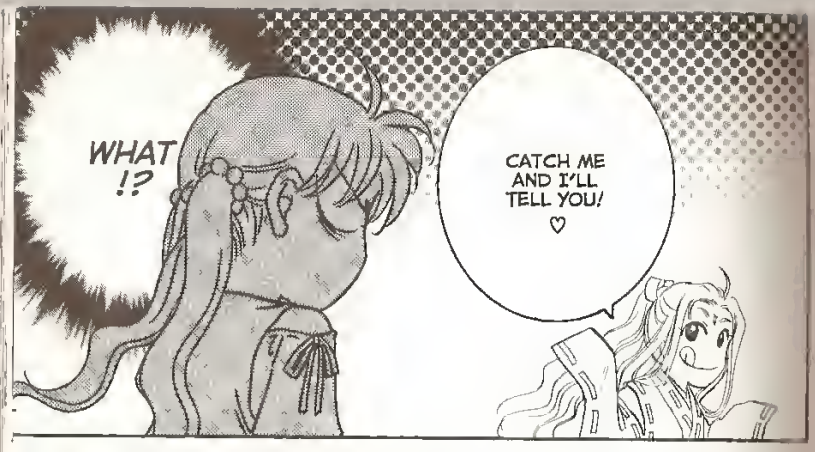
N... NO WAY, I JUST...
IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU, GOTO-SAN!
AND HE SAID HE LIKED ME TOO!
...I GOT BRAVE AND ASKED MY CRUSH OUT!
WELL, SINCE YOU SAID IT'D WORK OUT...
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
WHEN THE EARTH IS DRY AND CRACKED...
SOME OTHER GIRLS...
...WANT YOU TO TELL THEIR FORTUNES!
I DON'T THINK IT WOULD HELP ANYBODY.
...IT JUST MADE ME SICK.
EVEN THOUGH I COULD ALWAYS SEE THE RED THREAD OF DESTINY...

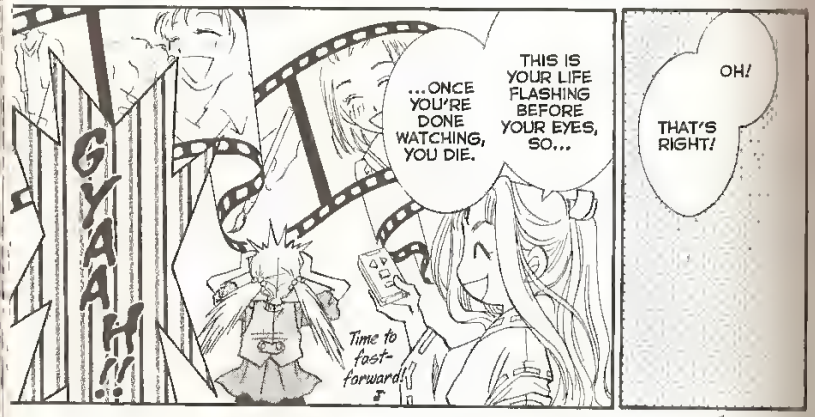

YOU WANT...
...POWER? IS THAT IT?
BECAUSE IT FELT LIKE...
...I'D FOUND A POWER ALL MY OWN.
...EVEN THOUGH BINDING TO SHIRO GANE...
...TURNED ME BACK INTO A KID...
...I WAS STILL HAPPY.
...AND MADE ME FEEL UNSURE ABOUT EVERYTHING...
WHO SAID THAT!?
WHAT!?
WHO'S THERE!?
IF YOU FOLLOW MY RULES...

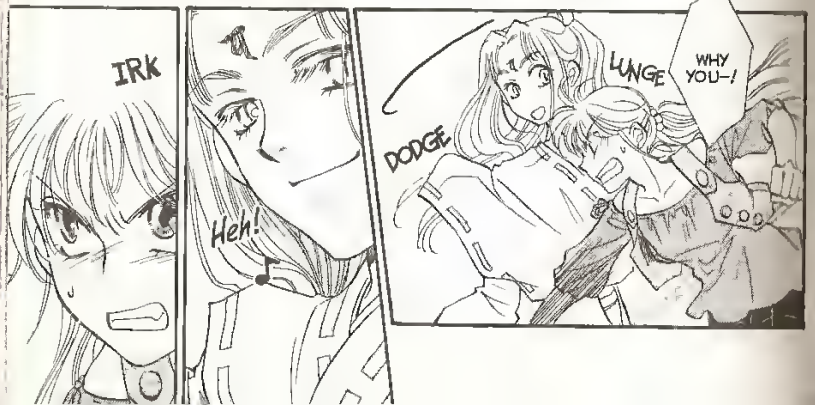

夏の雨人
MM-HM.
IT'S BEAUTIFUL.
OH!
MAYBE THAT'S WHY...
I WANTED...
...TO BE LIKE THE RAIN.

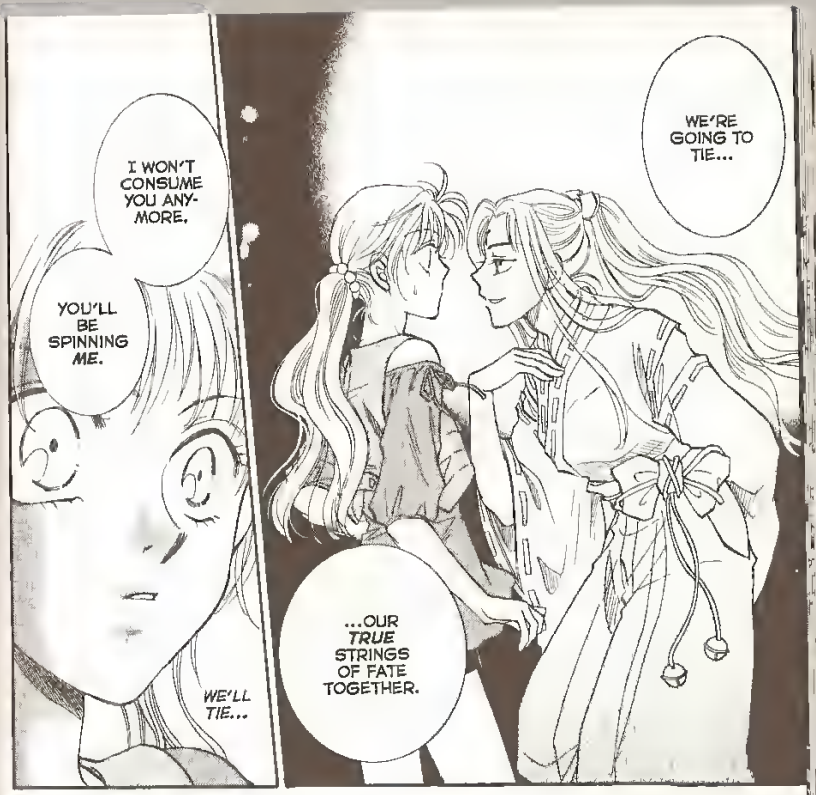

Oh, how shall I put this..?
ME?
WELL, I'M...
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY...I'M THE SPIRIT OF SHIROGANE.
Simple
Heh!
WH... WHO'RE YOU!?
HOW DARE YOU RANDOMLY ENTER MY PSYCHE!
YOU JUST MADE THAT UP!!
And don't you "Heh!" me!
I don't trust you...
But it's true!!
WOULDN'T WE JUST BE REINSTATING OUR PACT ALL OVER AGAIN?
NO.
THEN MAKE A PACT WITH ME.
YOU WANT POWER, RIGHT?
BACK TO BUSI-NESS!

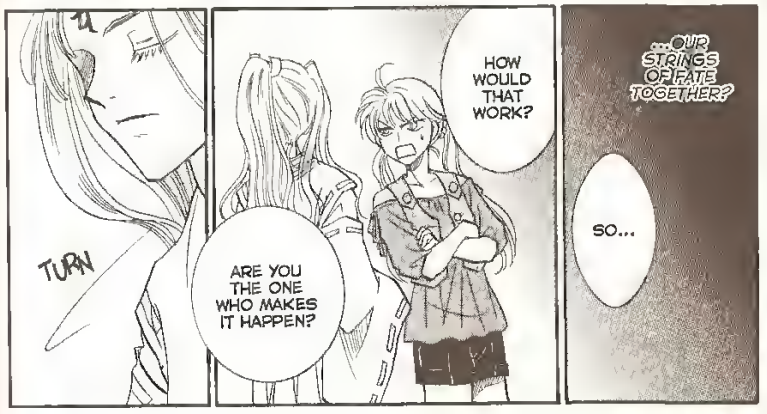
...I WOULD NOT MIND GIVING IT.
WHA...
HUH!?

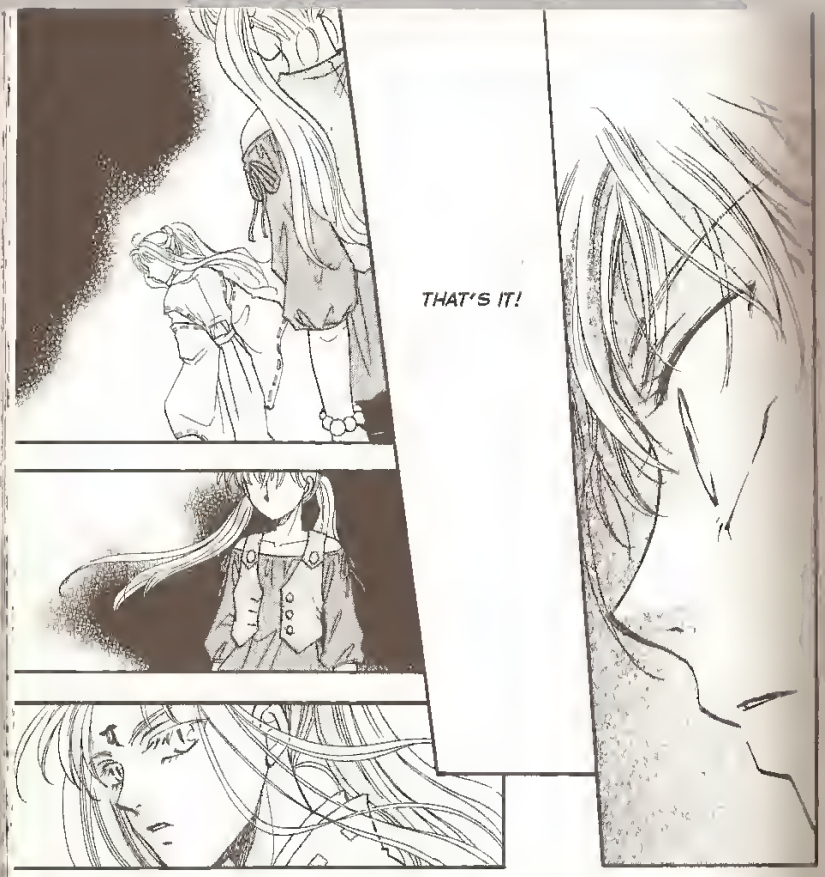

WHAT !?
CATCH ME AND I'LL TELL YOU! ♡


GYAAH!!
...ONCE YOU'RE DONE WATCHING, YOU DIE.
THIS IS YOUR LIFE FLASHING BEFORE YOUR EYES, SO...
Time to fast-forward!
OH!
THAT'S RIGHT!

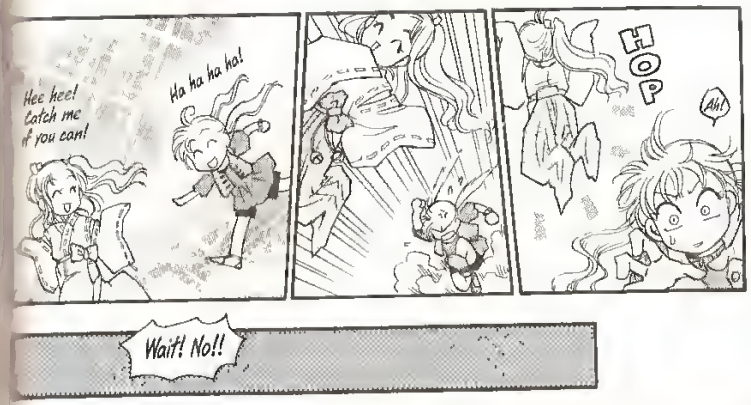

IRK
Heh!
DODGE
LUNGE
WHY YOU–!

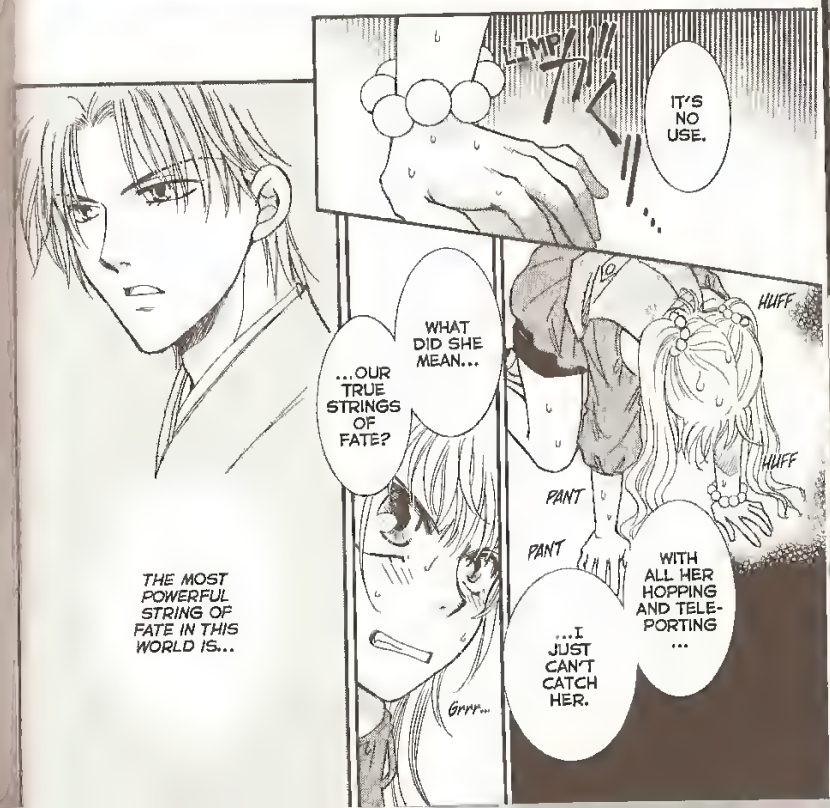

I WON'T CONSUME YOU ANY-MORE.
YOU'LL BE SPINNING ME.
WE'LL TIE...
WE'RE GOING TO TIE...
...OUR TRUE STRINGS OF FATE TOGETHER.


TURN
ARE YOU THE ONE WHO MAKES IT HAPPEN?
HOW WOULD THAT WORK?
...OUR STRINGS OF FATE TOGETHER?
SO...

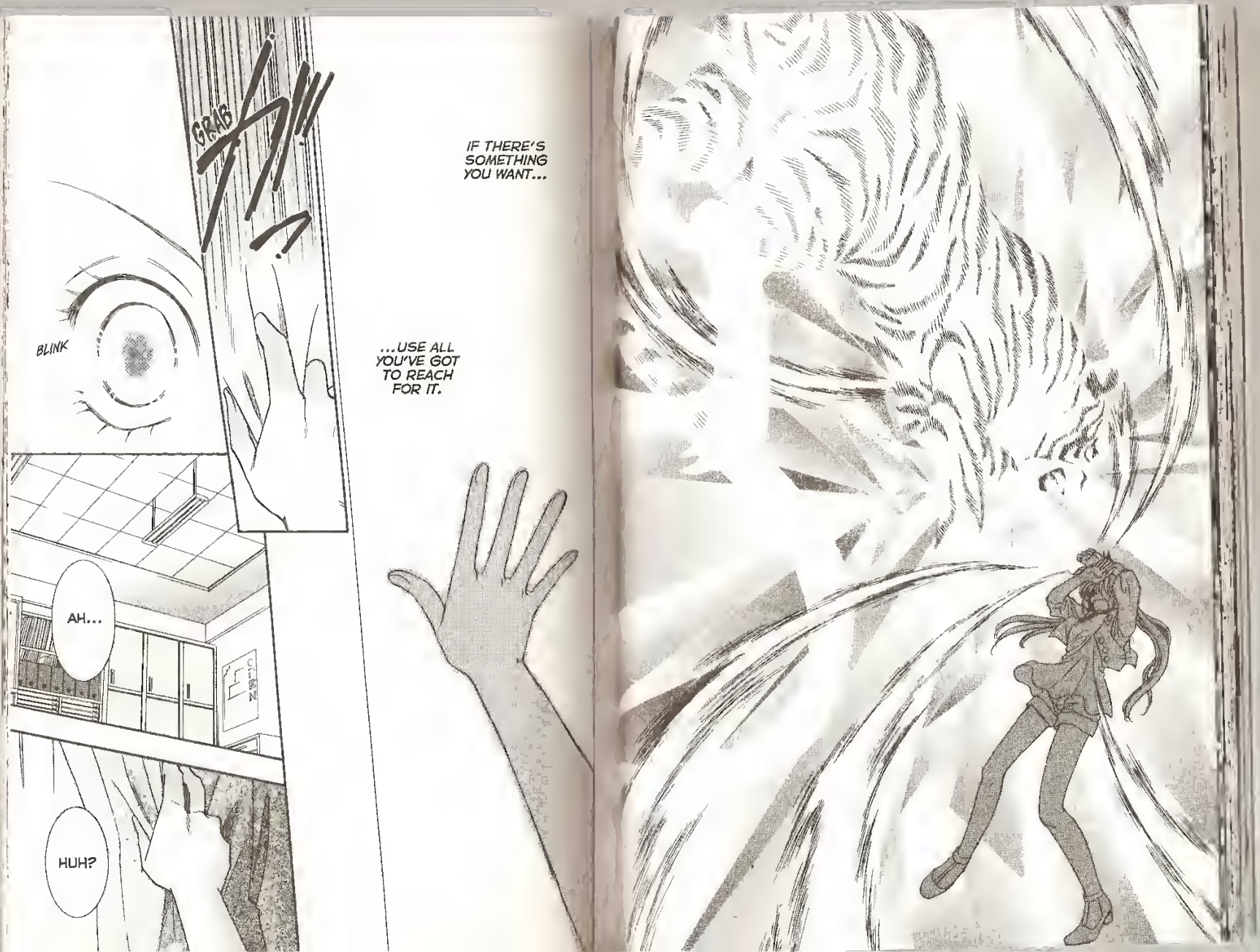

THAT'S IT!

...THE ONE CONNECTED TO PEOPLE'S WILLS.
THE MOST POWERFUL STRING OF FATE IS...

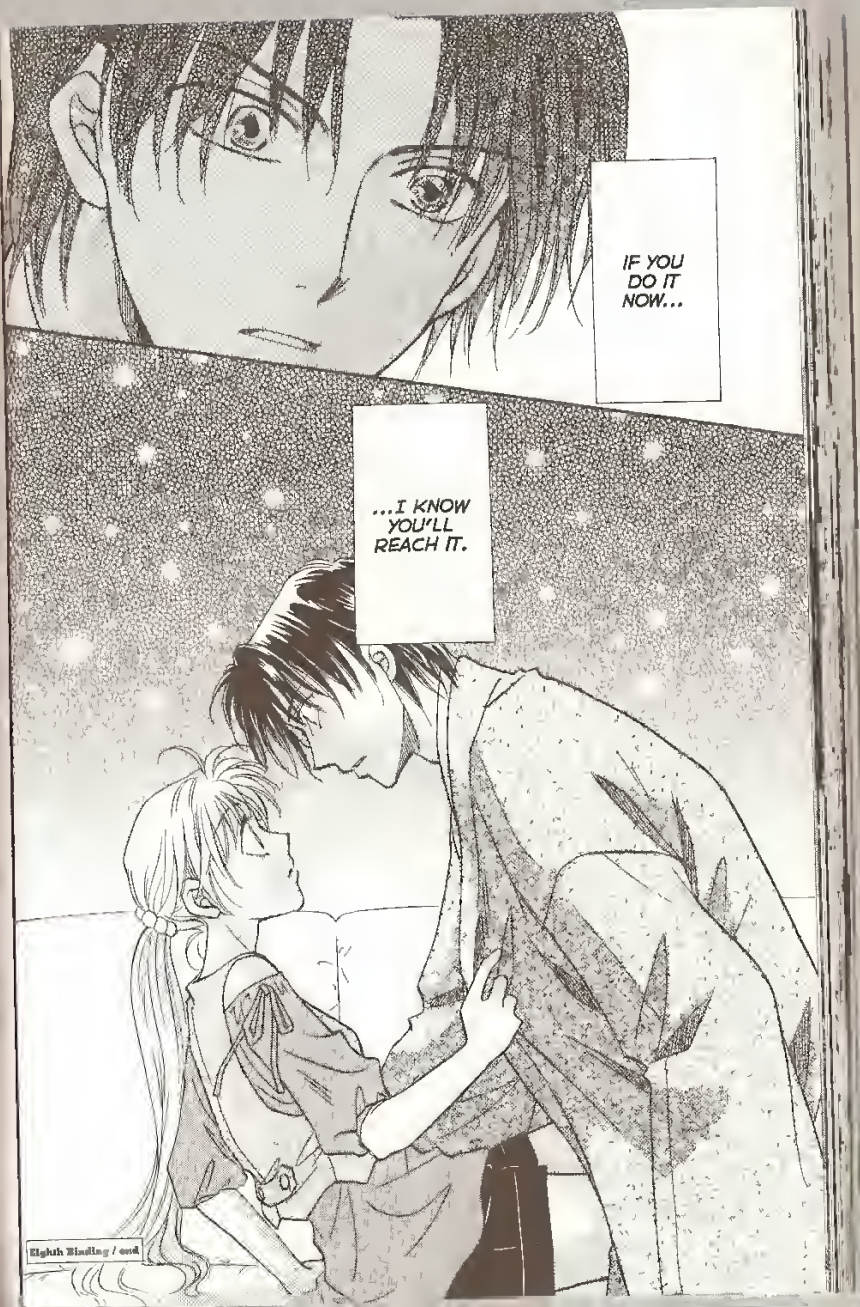

Hee hee! Catch me if you can!
Ha ha ha ha!
HOP
Ah!
Wait! No!!

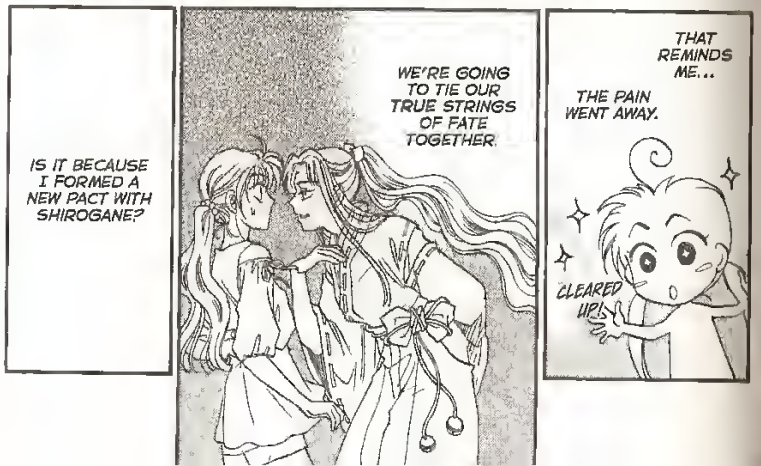

IT'S NO USE.
HUFF
HUFF
PANT
PANT
...I JUST CAN'T CATCH HER.
WITH ALL HER HOPPING AND TELE-PORTING ...
WHAT DID SHE MEAN...
...OUR TRUE STRINGS OF FATE?
Grrr...
THE MOST POWERFUL STRING OF FATE IN THIS WORLD IS...

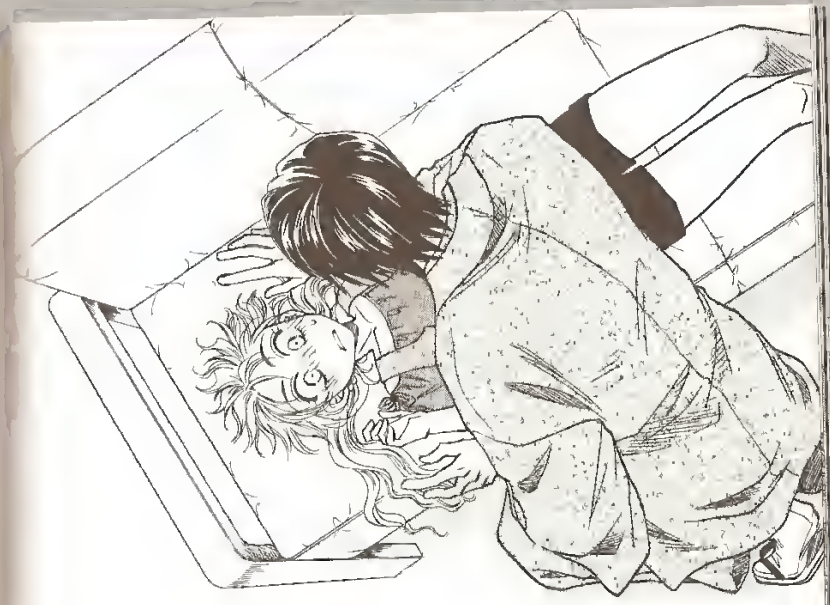
A THREAD OF STEEL!
COME!
SHIRO-GANE!
Huh.
WHAT I LACKED WASN'T...
...SIZE, HEIGHT OR STRENGTH.
IT WAS A STRONG WILL.
TO HELP ME REACH.
AND PROTECT.
AND BECOME NECESSARY.
ONE THAT COULD NEVER BE KNOCKED DOWN...
...OR SEVERED.
WHIP


GRAB
BLINK
AH...
HUH?
IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU WANT...
...USE ALL YOU'VE GOT TO REACH FOR IT.

Ninth Binding
縛りの玖
WHAT THE...?
THUD
IN THIS POSITION ...
UHHH...
...THE MASTER'S FACE IS RIGHT ABOVE ME.


IF YOU DO IT NOW...
...I KNOW YOU'LL REACH IT.
Eighth Binding / end

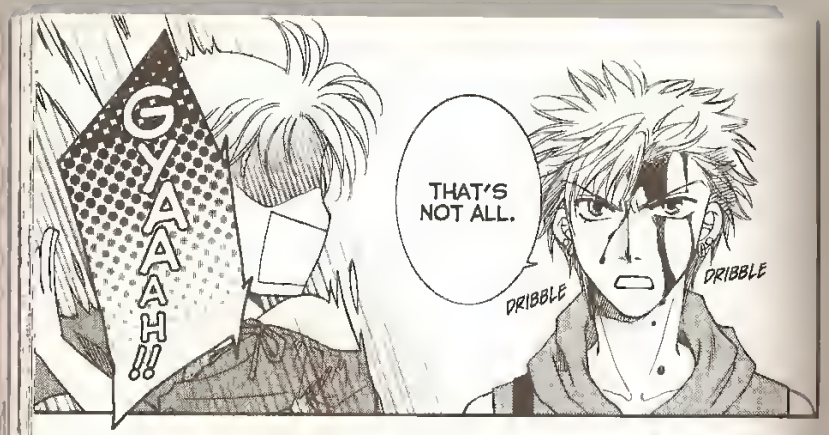

IS IT BECAUSE I FORMED A NEW PACT WITH SHIROGANE?
WE'RE GOING TO TIE OUR TRUE STRINGS OF FATE TOGETHER.
THAT REMINDS ME...
THE PAIN WENT AWAY.
CLEARED UP!



Ninth Binding
縛りの玖
しばりのきゅう

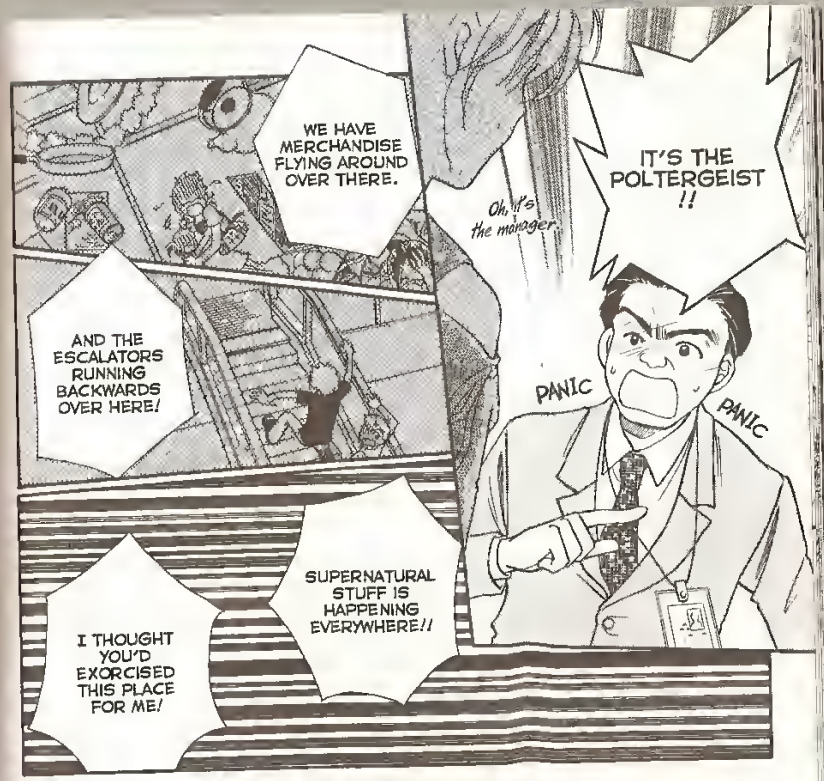
HERE...
...TOO?
HUH!?
SO IT'S COME HERE, TOO, HAS IT?
WH...
WHAT WAS THAT!?
TMP
TMP
IT'S LIKE A HURRICANE PASSED THROUGH HERE...
DAAAANG.

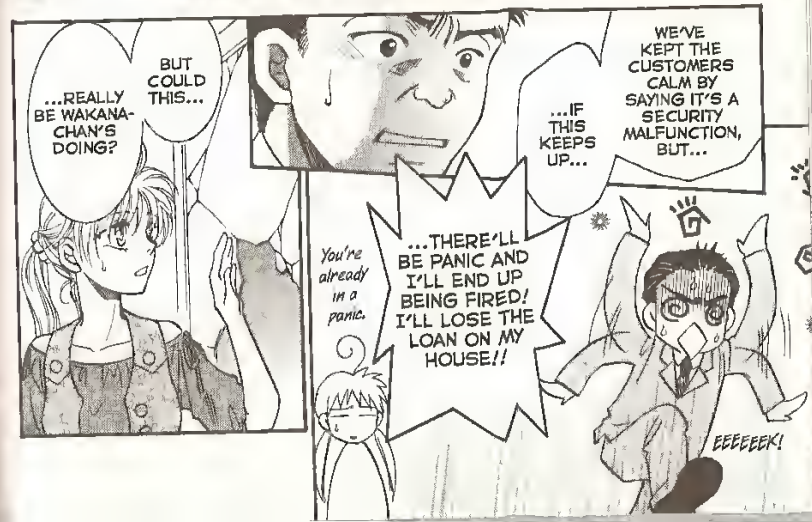
HUH!?
WHAT THE...!?
GRAB
UM... MASTER?
A LITTLE WHILE AGO, THE SPIRIT OF SHIROGA-
!
CRACK


GYAAAH!!
THAT'S NOT ALL.
DRIBBLE
DRIBBLE

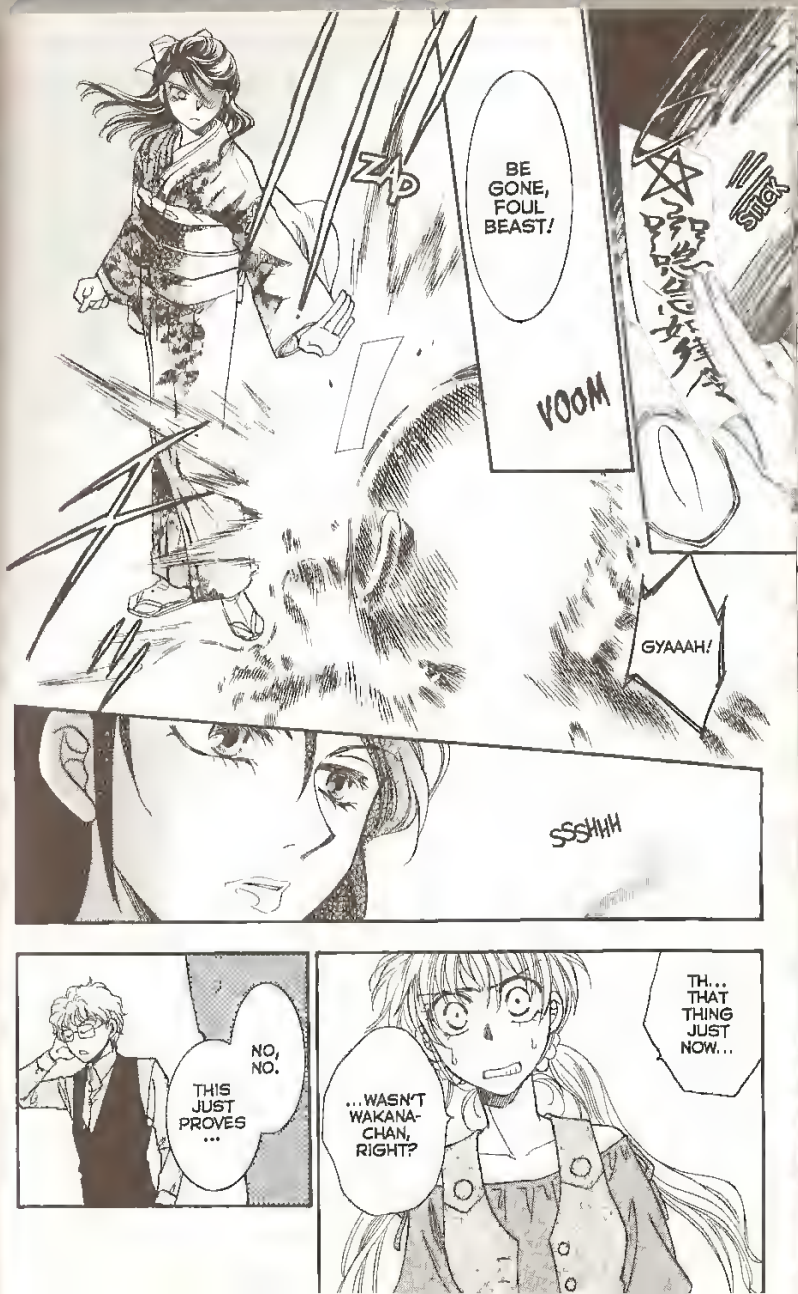
You didn't waste any time saving your own butt.
HE DIDN'T AVOID THE GLASS FAST ENOUGH.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM.
HA
HA
HA
T... TSUNA!?

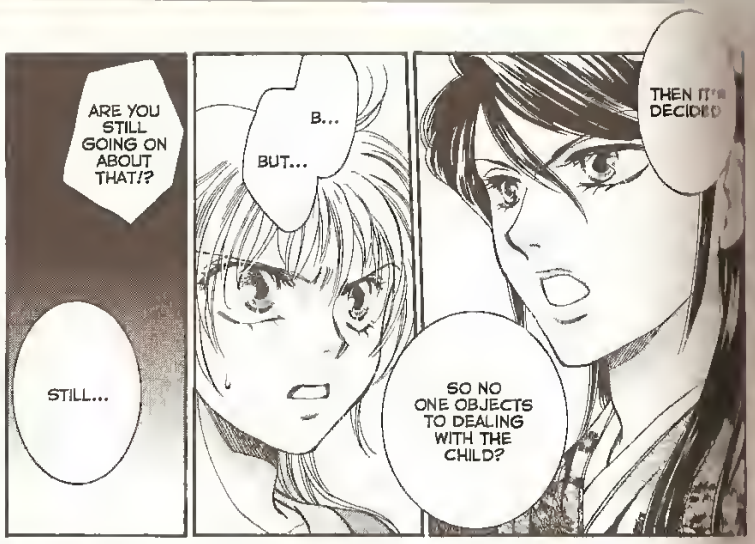
LICK
WHAAAA!
DIDN'T YOU HEAR HIM? I'M FINE.
YOU HAVE TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL!
STICK
SEE? JUST A LICK-
I COULD LICK A LITTLE SCRATCH LIKE THIS BETTER.
WIPE
DON'T BE STUPID!

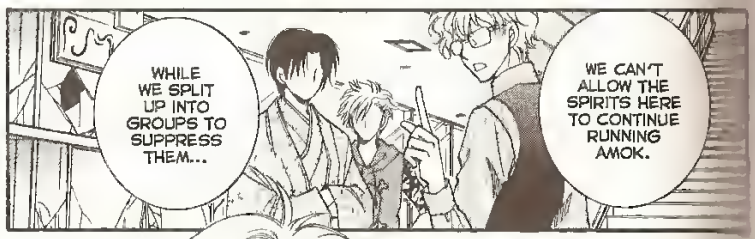

WE HAVE MERCHANDISE FLYING AROUND OVER THERE.
IT'S THE POLTERGEIST !!
Oh, it's the manager.
AND THE ESCALATORS RUNNING BACKWARDS OVER HERE!
PANIC
PANIC
I THOUGHT YOU'D EXORCISED THIS PLACE FOR ME!
SUPERNATURAL STUFF IS HAPPENING EVERYWHERE!!

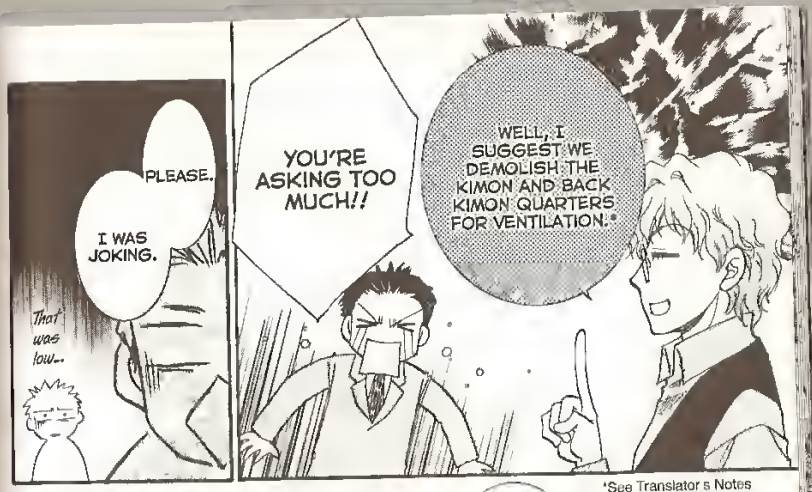

...REALLY BE WAKANA-CHAN'S DOING?
BUT COULD THIS...
...IF THIS KEEPS UP...
WE'VE KEPT THE CUSTOMERS CALM BY SAYING IT'S A SECURITY MALFUNCTION, BUT...
You're already in a panic.
...THERE'LL BE PANIC AND I'LL END UP BEING FIRED! I'LL LOSE THE LOAN ON MY HOUSE!!
EEEEEEK!

PLACES WHERE MANY PEOPLE GATHER ...
... ALWAYS ATTRACT SPIRITS.
THE STRUCTURE!?
AND IF THEY ARE THE SITE OF A HEINOUS EVENT...
...ALL SORTS OF SPIRITS CAN BE DRAWN IN.
...THAT THIS BUILDING'S STRUCTURE IS OFF.
I felt it the second I stepped inside
THIS SHOPPING MALL...
...IS LIKE A MAZE...
...AND IT HAS DISTURBINGLY FEW WINDOWS AND EXITS.
WH...
WHAT SHOULD I DO!?
THE SPIRITS DRIFT IN...
...AND CAN'T GET OUT.
How could you support a place like this!?
I didn't know!!
Ha!

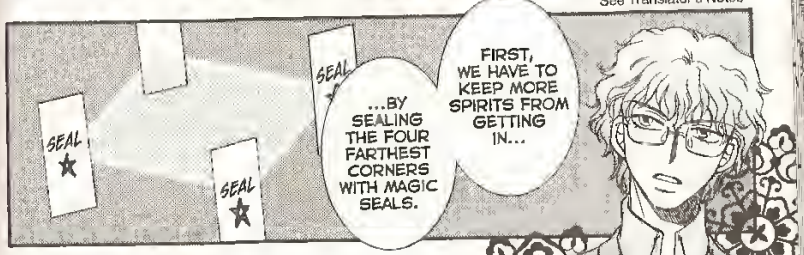

ZAP
BE GONE, FOUL BEAST!
VOOM
STICK
GYAAAH!
SSSHHH
NO, NO.
THIS JUST PROVES ...
TH... THAT THING JUST NOW...
...WASN'T WAKANA-CHAN, RIGHT?

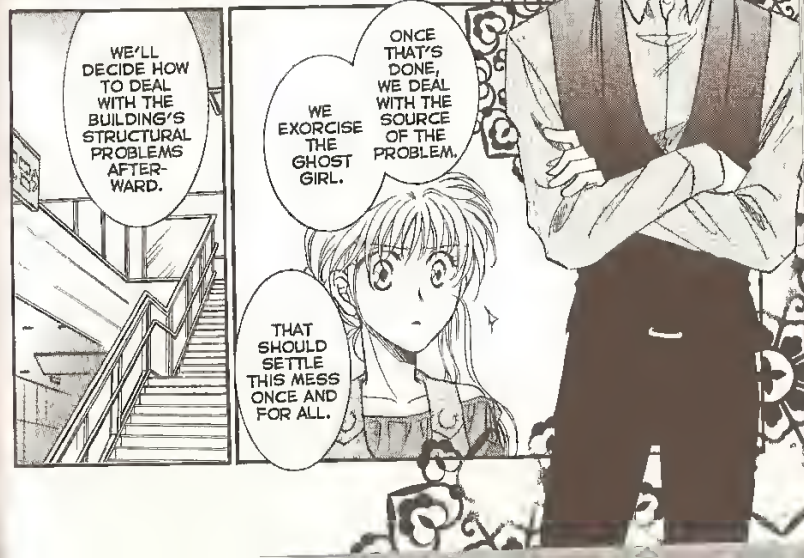





PLEASE.
I WAS JOKING.
That was low...
YOU'RE ASKING TOO MUCH!!
WELL, I SUGGEST WE DEMOLISH THE KIMON AND BACK KIMON QUARTERS FOR VENTILATION.*

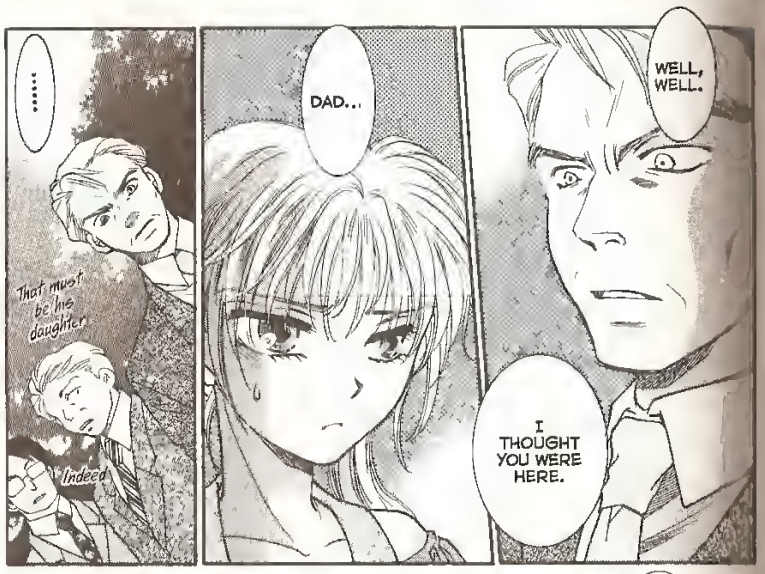
*See Translator's Notes



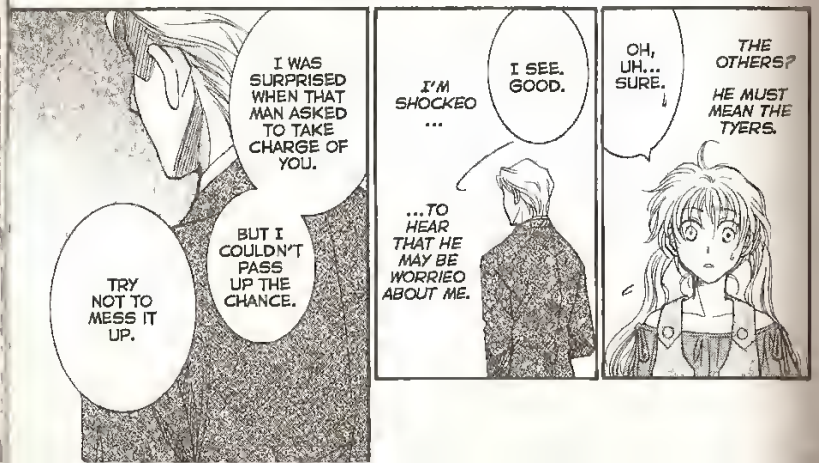

WE'LL DECIDE HOW TO DEAL WITH THE BUILDING'S STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS AFTER-WARD.
WE EXORCISE THE GHOST GIRL.
ONCE THAT'S DONE, WE DEAL WITH THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM.
THAT SHOULD SETTLE THIS MESS ONCE AND FOR ALL.

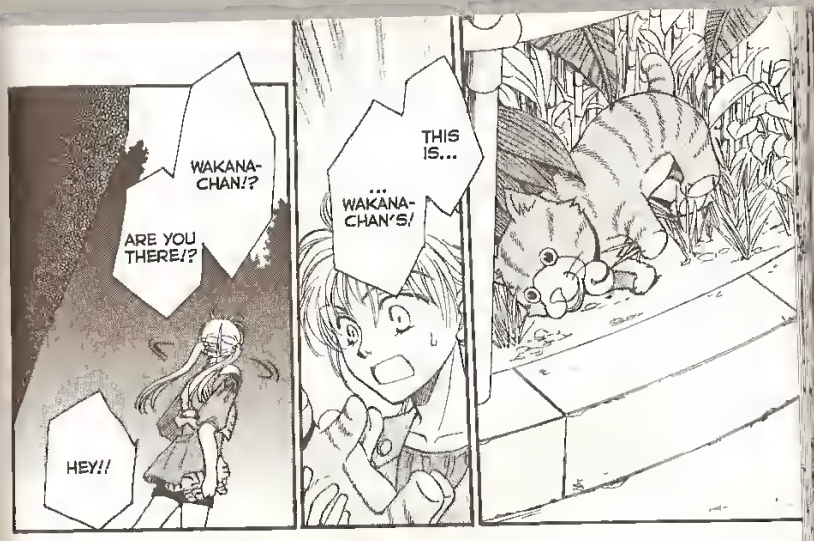
THIS LAST ONE IS...
PENTHOU GARDE
IT SHOULD BE ON THE RIGHT-HAND AISLE...
!?

STICK
WHY THAT...!!
"JUST PUT THEM WHERE WE TELL YOU."
ACTING LIKE THIS IS MY FIRST ASSIGNMENT!!
"EVEN A LITTLE KID...
...COULD DO IT."
THREE DOWN!
EASY!
I CAN'T DENY...
I HAVE TO MOVE FAST!
...THIS PLACE FEELS WEIRDER AND WEIRDER AS I GO ON.
ONE MORE TO GO!

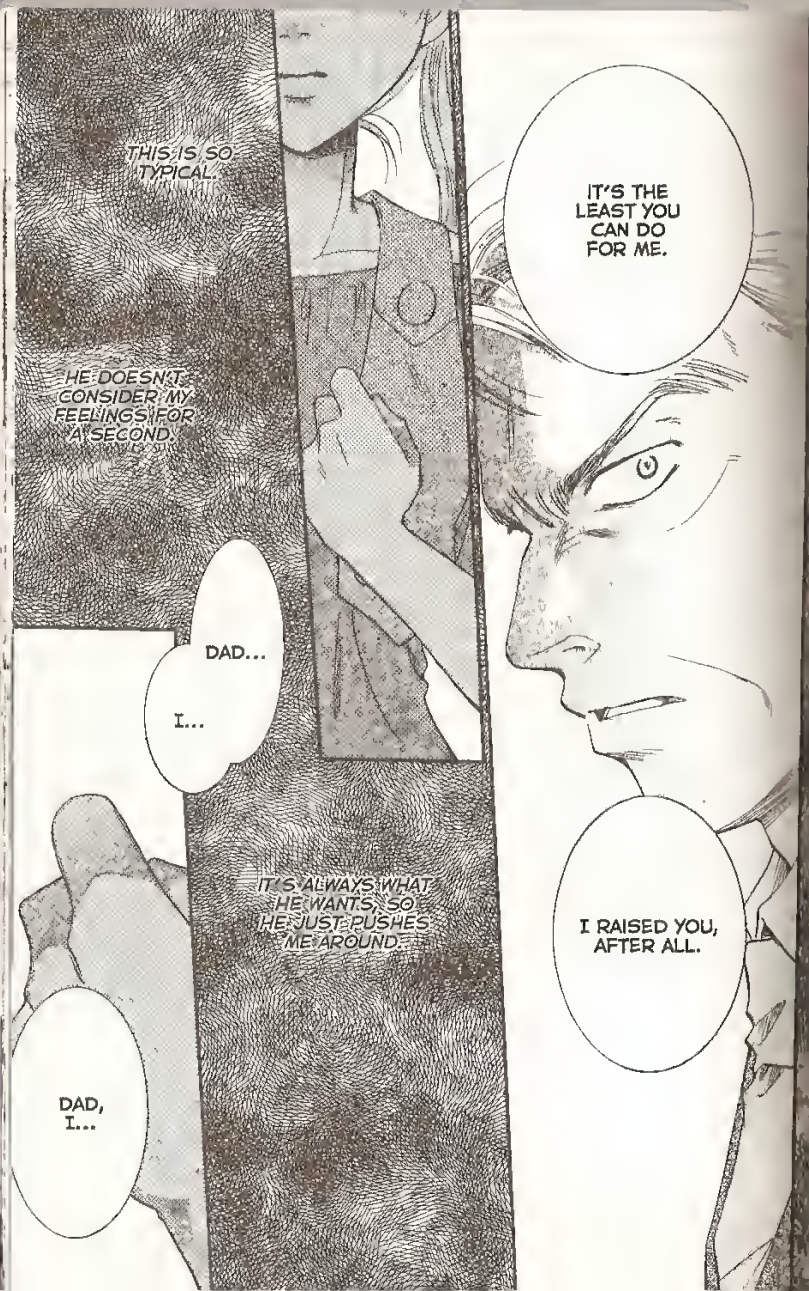

.....
That must be his daughter.
Indeed
DAD...
WELL, WELL.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE HERE.

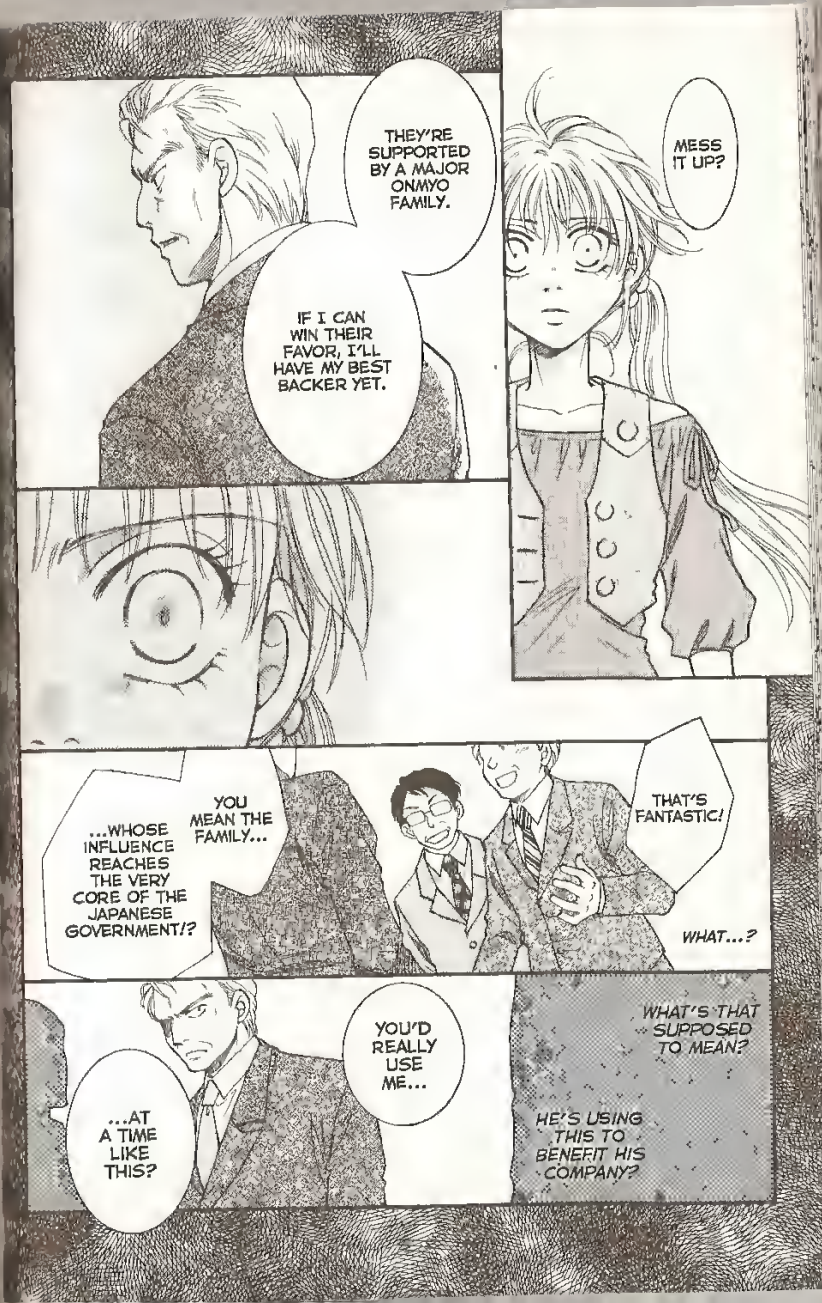
HUH?
EVERYTHING GOING WELL WITH THE OTHERS?
SO?


I WAS SURPRISED WHEN THAT MAN ASKED TO TAKE CHARGE OF YOU.
BUT I COULDN'T PASS UP THE CHANCE.
TRY NOT TO MESS IT UP.
I SEE. GOOD.
I'M SHOCKED ...
...TO HEAR THAT HE MAY BE WORRIED ABOUT ME.
OH, UH... SURE.
THE OTHERS?
HE MUST MEAN THE TYERS.


WAKANA-CHAN!?
ARE YOU THERE!?
HEY!!
THIS IS...
...WAKANA-CHAN'S!

TURN
WAKANA-CHA-

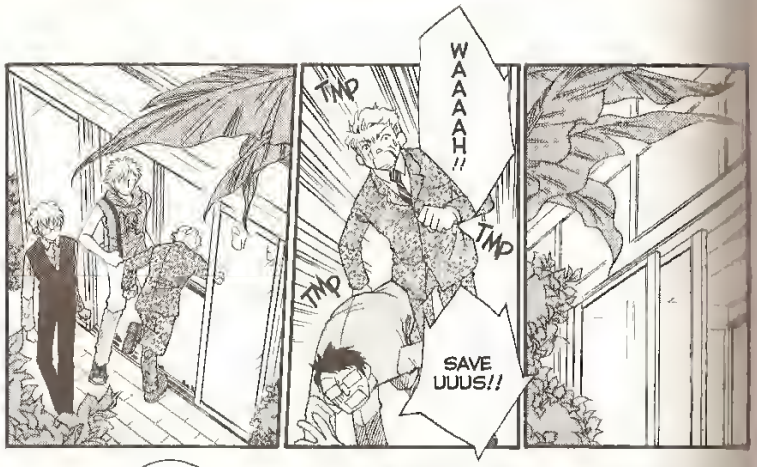

THIS IS SO TYPICAL.
HE DOESN'T CONSIDER MY FEELINGS FOR A SECOND.
IT'S ALWAYS WHAT HE WANTS, SO HE JUST PUSHES ME AROUND.
DAD...
I...
DAD, I...
IT'S THE LEAST YOU CAN DO FOR ME.
I RAISED YOU, AFTER ALL.

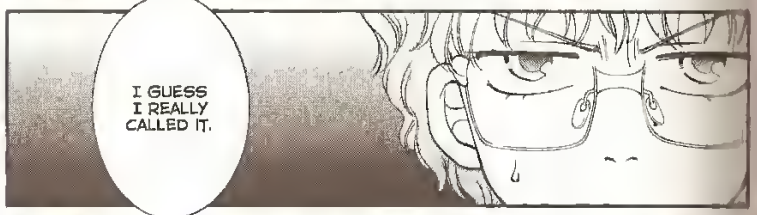

MESS IT UP?
THEY'RE SUPPORTED BY A MAJOR ONMYO FAMILY.
IF I CAN WIN THEIR FAVOR, I'LL HAVE MY BEST BACKER YET.
YOU MEAN THE FAMILY...
...WHOSE INFLUENCE REACHES THE VERY CORE OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT!?
THAT'S FANTASTIC!
WHAT...?
YOU'D REALLY USE ME...
...AT A TIME LIKE THIS?
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
HE'S USING THIS TO BENEFIT HIS COMPANY?

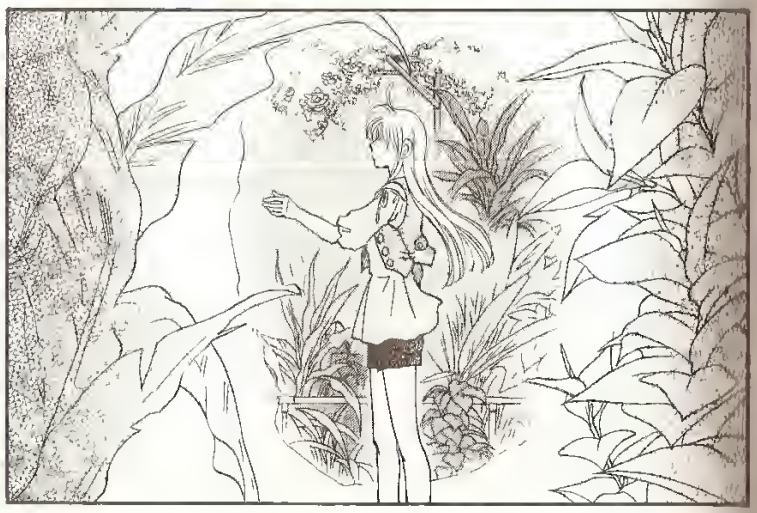
CLACK
CLACK
SHOCK
!?
TMP
TMP
WHO IS THIS KID?
WH...
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!?
THEY'RE ALL GATHERING!
THE SPIRITS...
CHILL

...WISH HE WOULD GO AWAY FOREVER, RIGHT?
WAKANA-CHAN!

...YOU SHOULD GET RID OF!!
YOU HATE YOUR DADDY, RIGHT?
SLITHER
CREEP
SLITHER
WELL, THINGS YOU HATE...


WAAAAH!!
TMP
TMP
TMP
SAVE UUUS!!


I GUESS I REALLY CALLED IT.



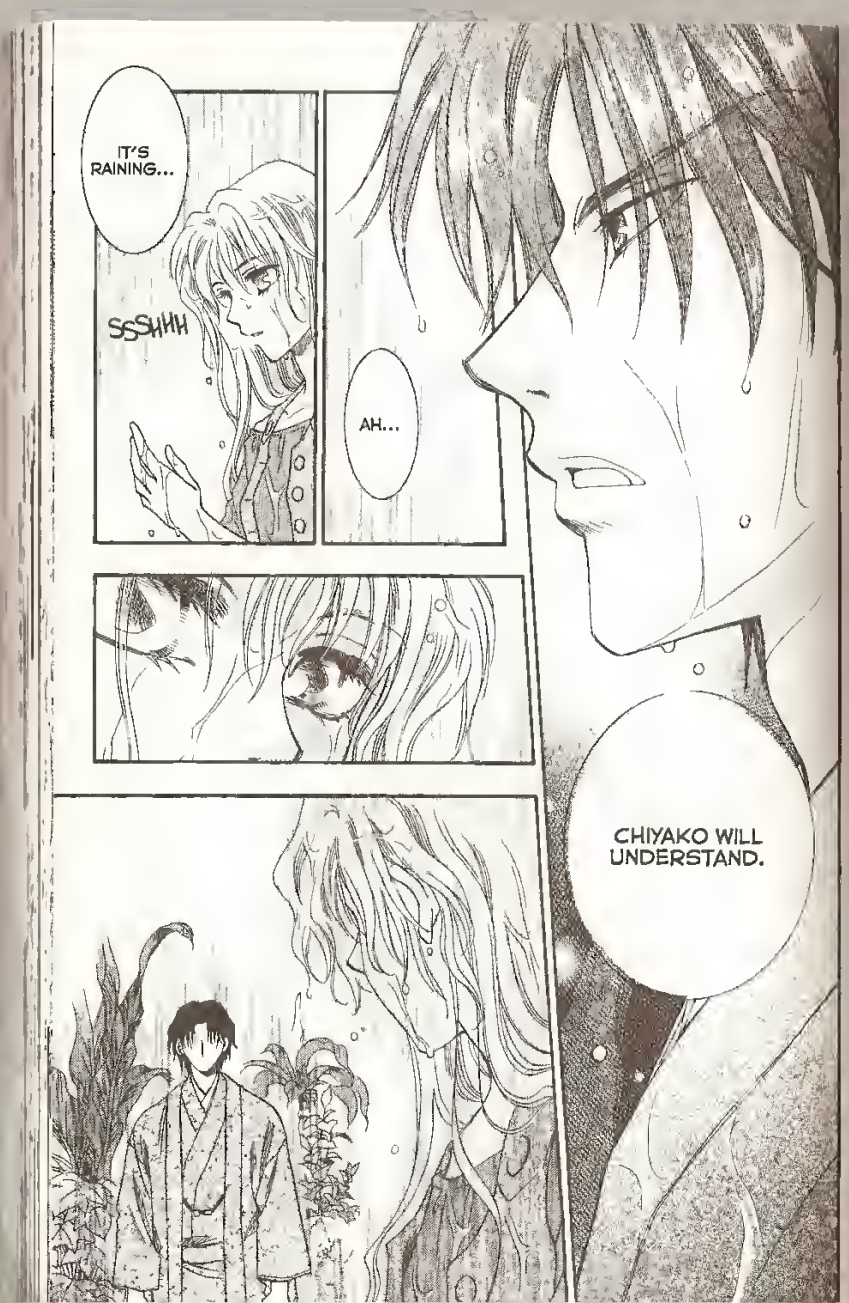
SSHHH
BZZT
Phew...
... CROSS PATHS WITH CHIKO-CHAN.
I JUST HOPE THEY DON'T...
PENTHOUS GARDEN
...I REALIZED THEY WERE GATHERING OVER THERE.
JUST WHEN I THOUGHT THE SPIRITS WERE CALMING DOWN...
YEAH.
CREEEEP
AKEO-SAN!
YOU FOUND SOME TOO?

QUIT ACTING LIKE YOU'RE OKAY WITH THIS!
IN TERMS OF ABILITY, THAT CHILD GHOST IS FAR SUPERIOR.
WELL, WITH CHIKO-CHAN USING HIM AS A SHIELD ...
...WE CAN'T ATTACK.
HATE...
TWITCH
HATE ...
DESPISE...
AKE-NII?
PASS
SQUEEZE
GUUH ...
AAAH!

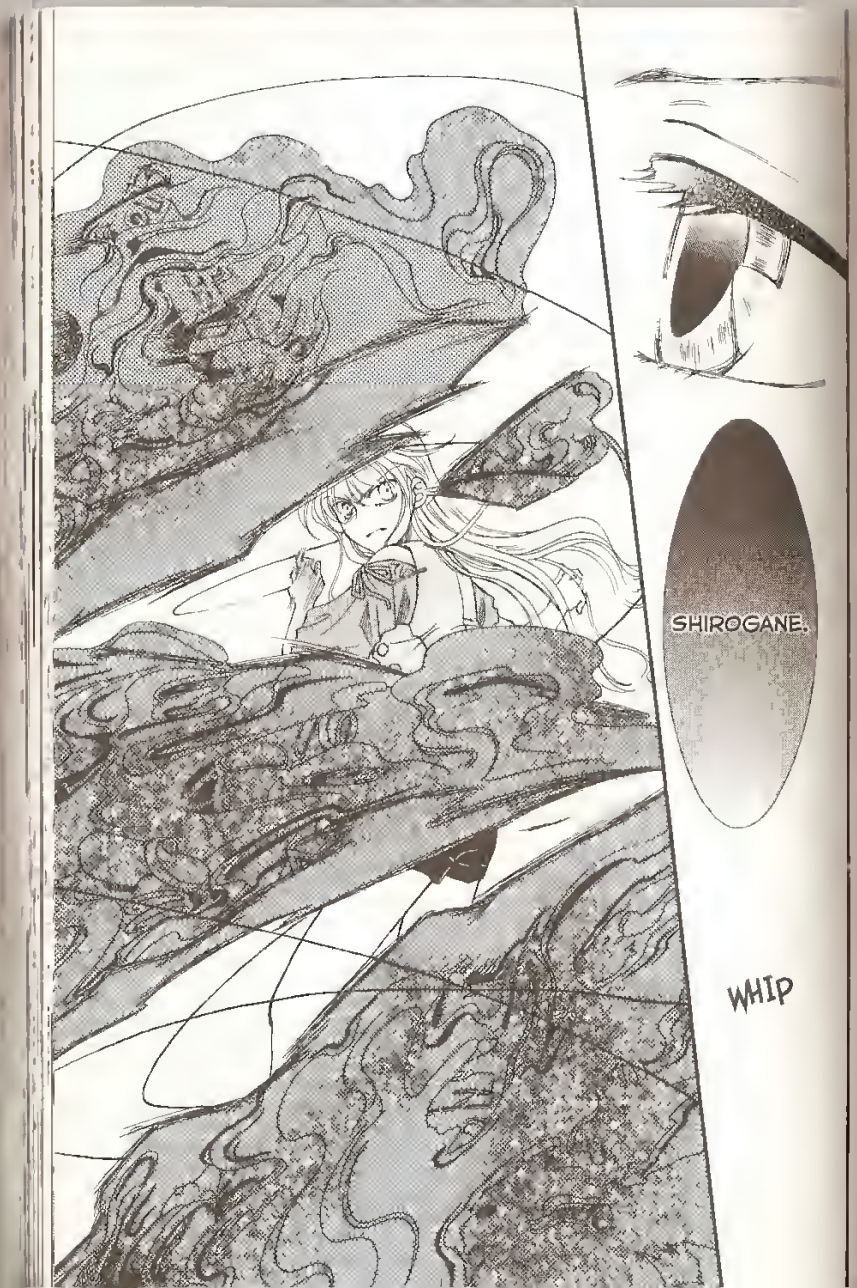
I HATE...
...ADULTS.
SQUEEZE!!
D...
DO SOME-THING!
HURRY!
HOW MUCH MORE USELESS CAN SHE GET!?
GREAT. SHE'S COMPLETELY POSSESSED!

HUH!?
WHERE'D HE AIM ...?
FWOOSH
!!
SSSHHH
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

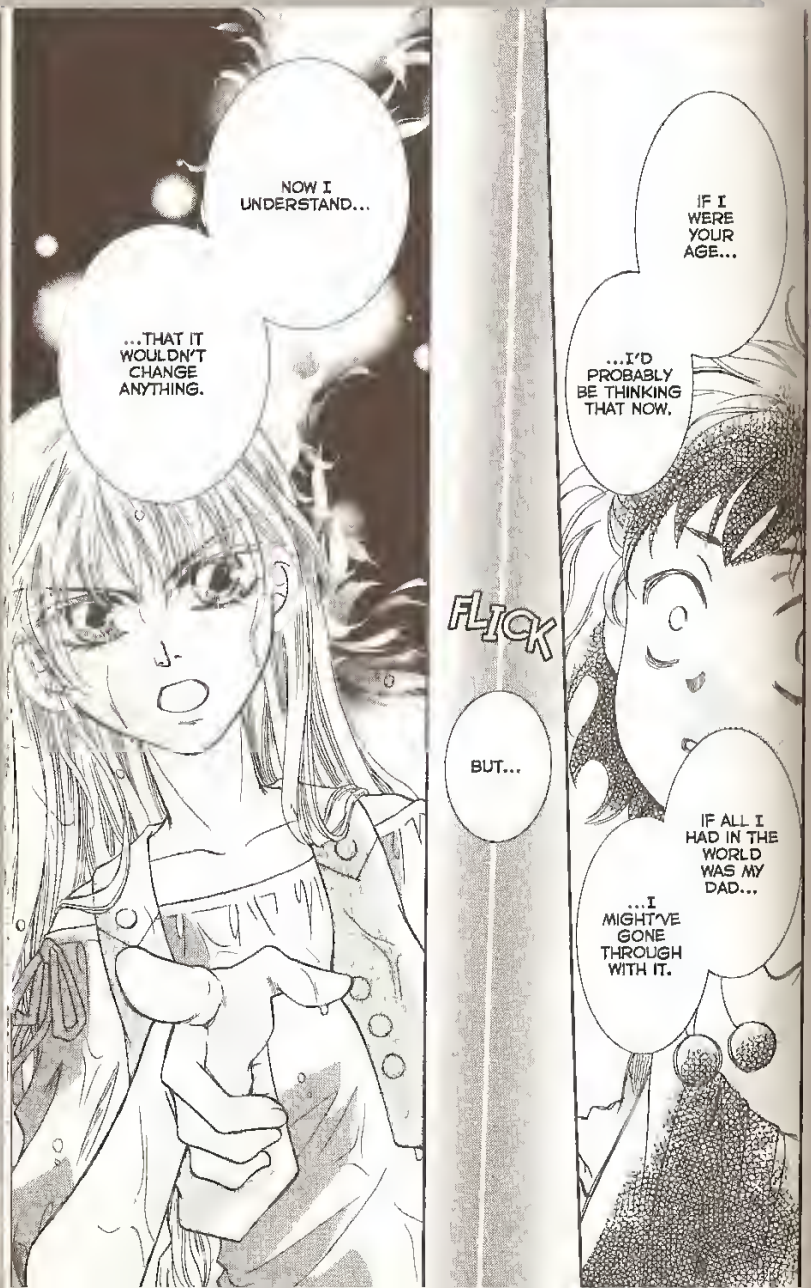
WHIP
AKE-NII!!
WAIT! YOU WOULDN'T!
CHIKO'S RIGHT THERE!
FWOOSH
SLICE

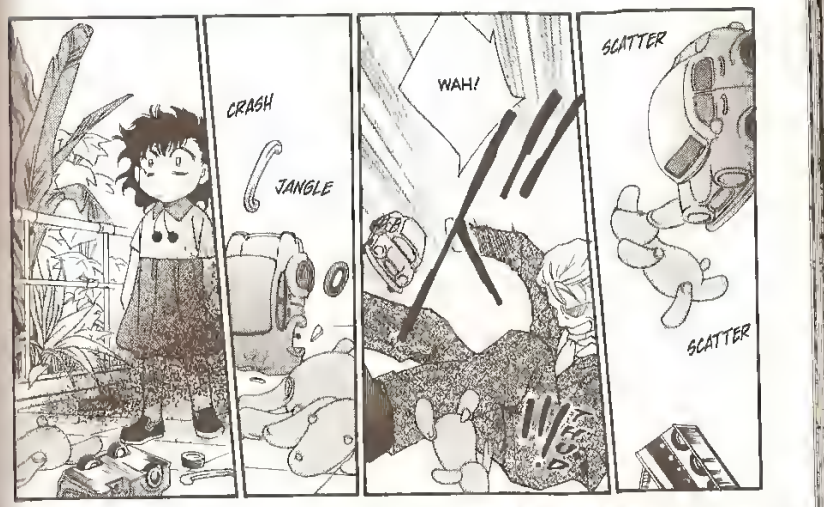

IT'S RAINING...
SSSHHH
AH...
CHIYAKO WILL UNDERSTAND.

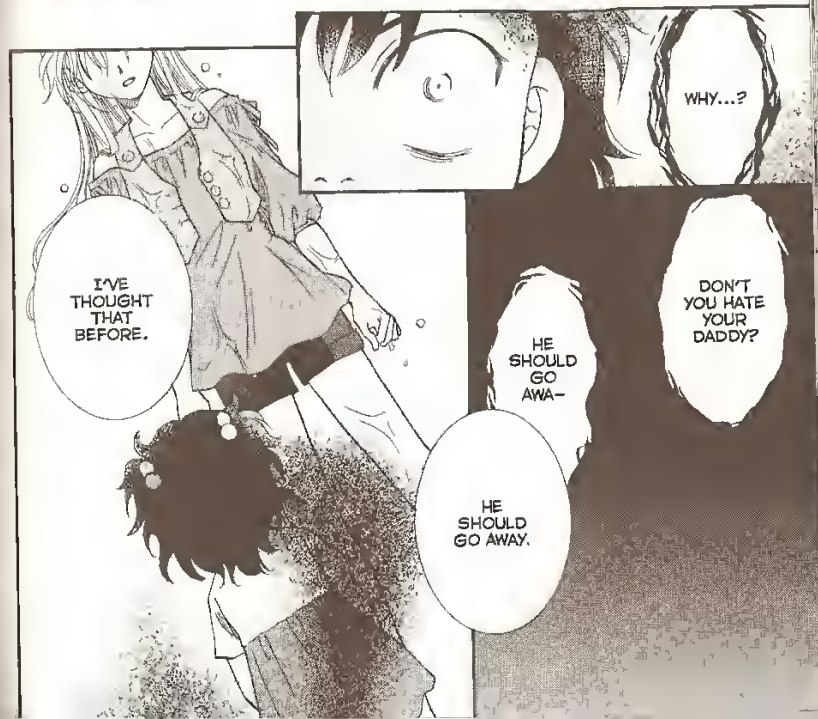
SSSHHH
THAT WON'T STOP THIS SPIRIT!
DON'T WORRY.
THE SPRINKLERS !?

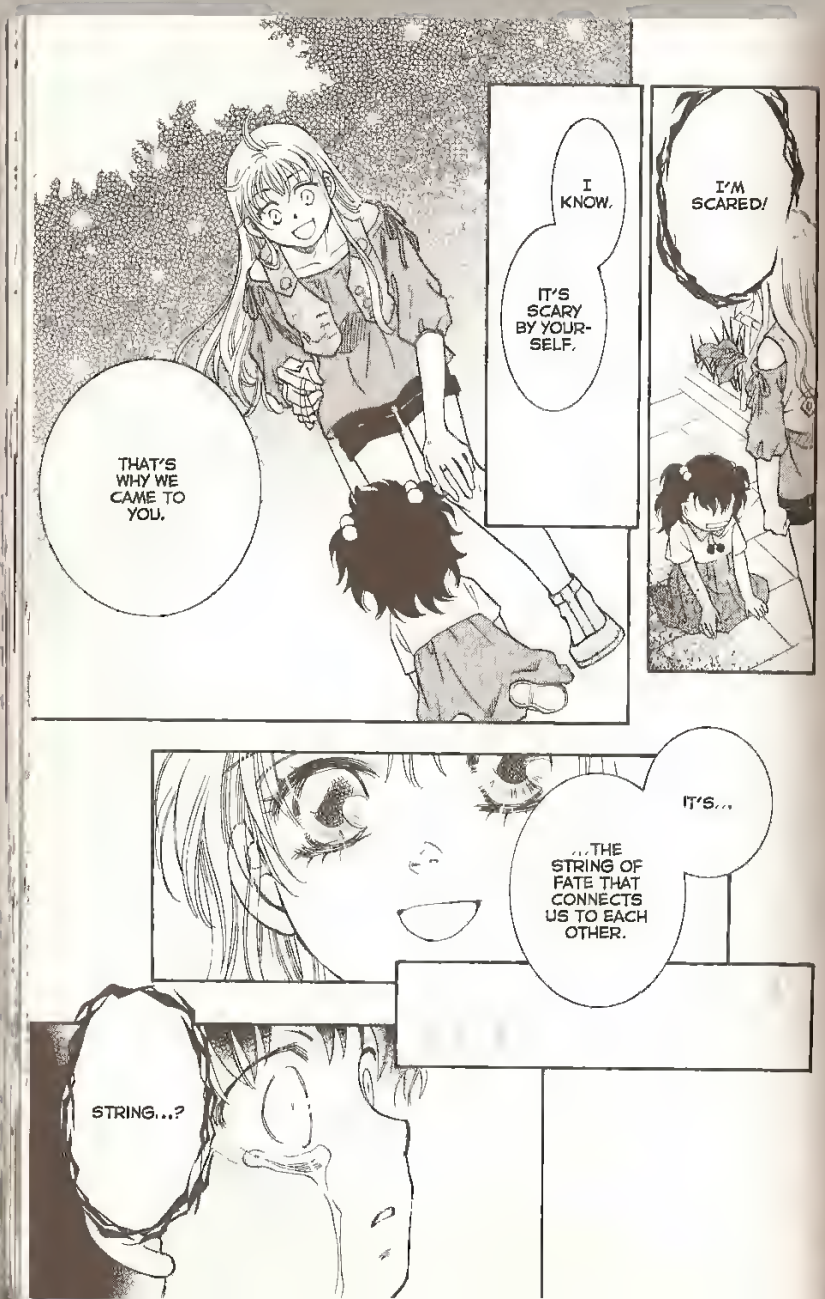

SHIROGANE.
WHIP

NO.
IT'S BECAUSE A NEW STRENGTH HAS AWAKENED INSIDE ME.
DID I JUST GET TALLER?
...ALWAYS SO SMALL?
WAS THIS MAN...
JUST LIKE HOW THE RAIN...
...QUENCHES THE DRY, CRACKED EARTH.
I HAVE SOMEONE WHO GIVES ME STRENGTH.


NOW I UNDERSTAND...
...THAT IT WOULDN'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
J-
FLICK
BUT...
IF I WERE YOUR AGE...
...I'D PROBABLY BE THINKING THAT NOW.
IF ALL I HAD IN THE WORLD WAS MY DAD...
...I MIGHT'VE GONE THROUGH WITH IT.

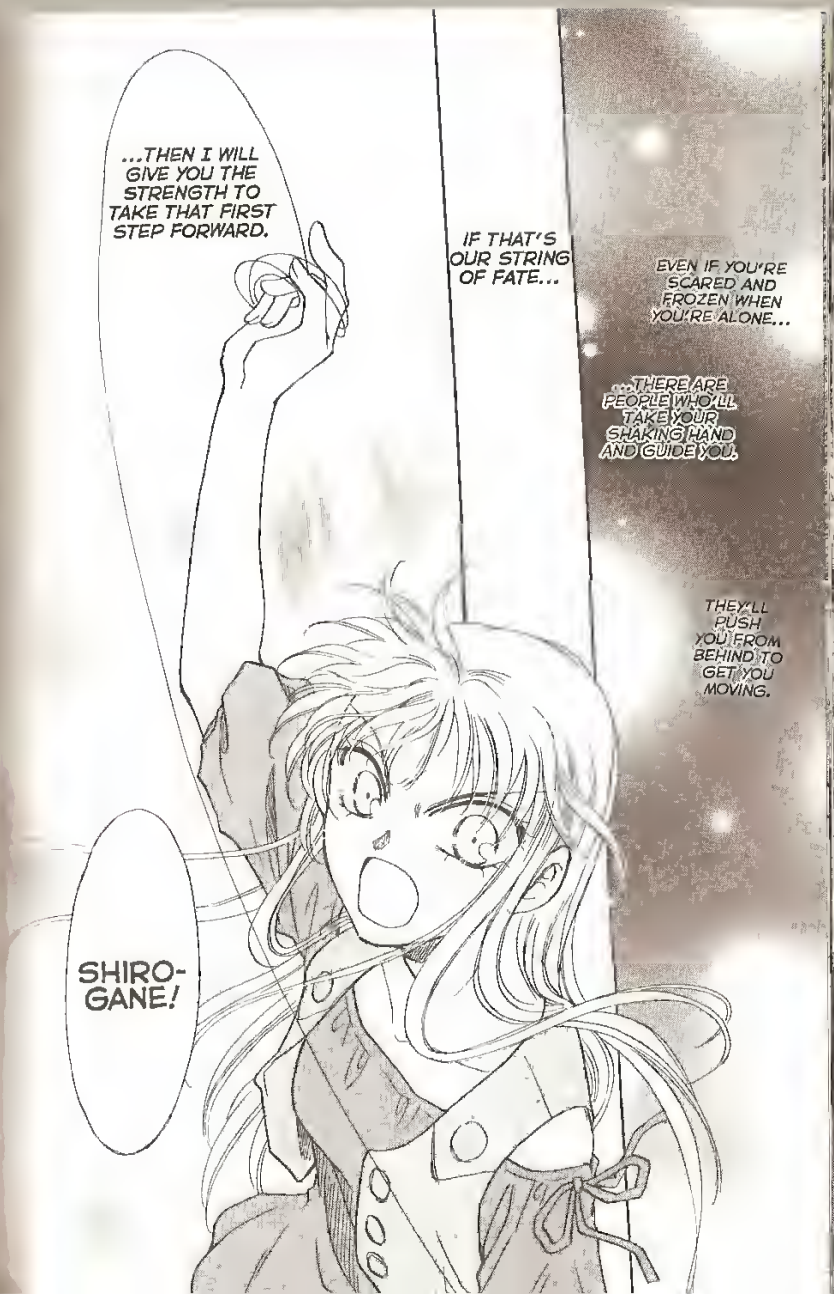

CRASH
JANGLE
WAH!
SCATTER
SCATTER

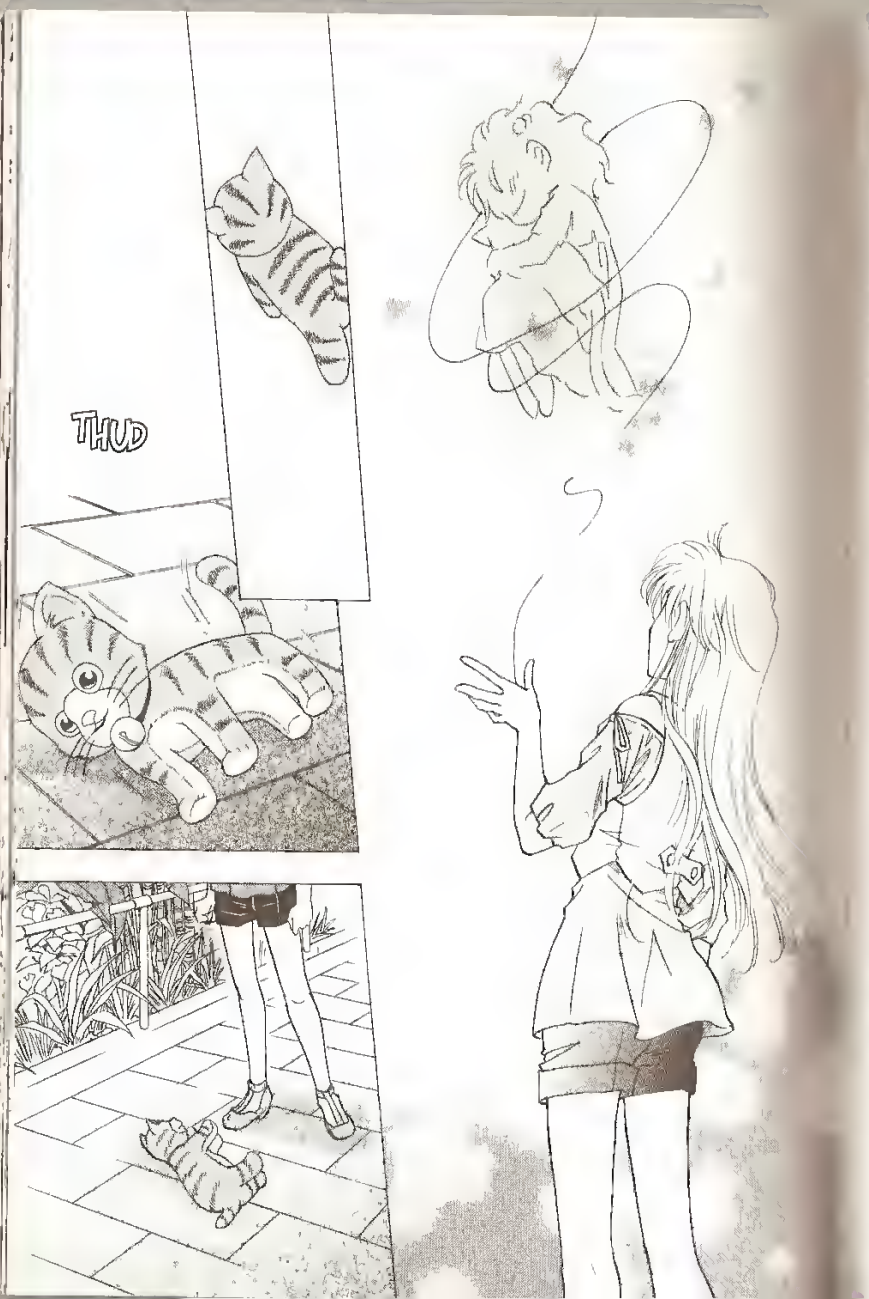

WHY...?
I'VE THOUGHT THAT BEFORE.
DON'T YOU HATE YOUR DADDY?
HE SHOULD GO AWA-
HE SHOULD GO AWAY.


THAT'S WHY WE CAME TO YOU.
I KNOW. IT'S SCARY BY YOURSELF.
I'M SCARED!
IT'S...
...THE STRING OF FATE THAT CONNECTS US TO EACH OTHER.
STRING...?

THUNK
NO...
NO, I'M SCARED...
DON'T BE LIKE MY DADDY...
ARE YOU MAD AT ME?
WAS I A BAD GIRL?
W...
WHY?
WOBBLE

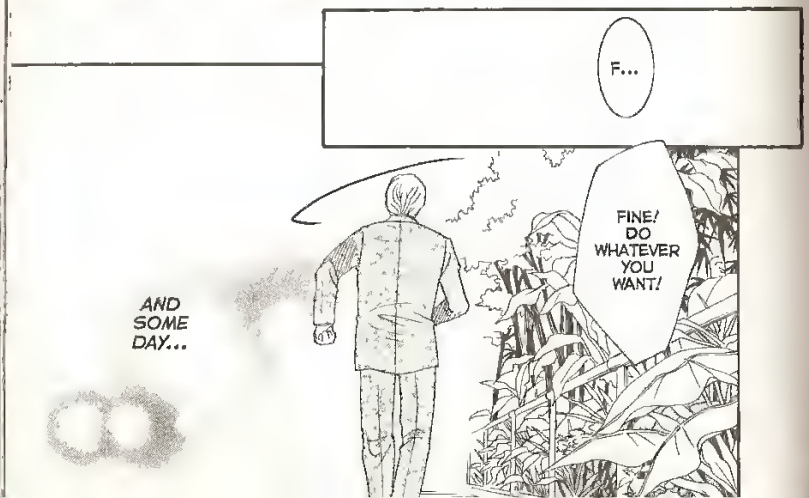
TWIRL
KITTY...
IT'S YOU!

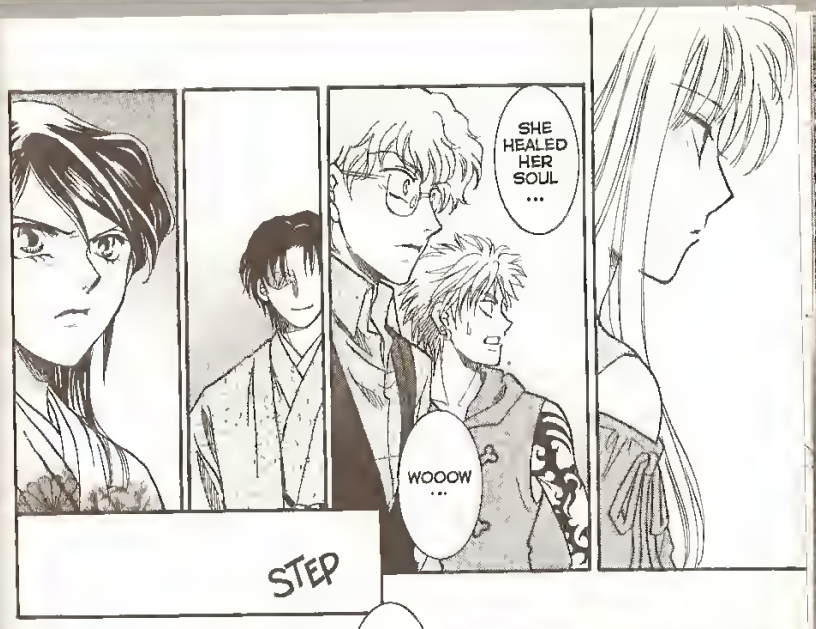

...THEN I WILL GIVE YOU THE STRENGTH TO TAKE THAT FIRST STEP FORWARD.
IF THAT'S OUR STRING OF FATE...
EVEN IF YOU'RE SCARED AND FROZEN WHEN YOU'RE ALONE...
...THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO'LL TAKE YOUR SHAKING HAND AND GUIDE YOU.
THEY'LL PUSH YOU FROM BEHIND TO GET YOU MOVING.
SHIRO-GANE!

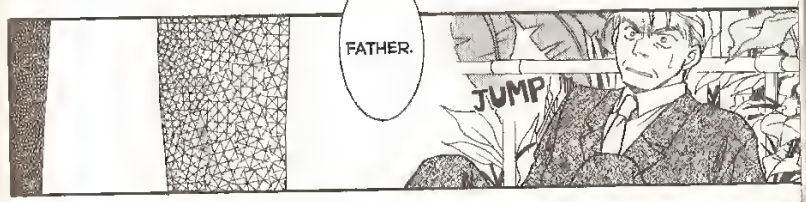

THUD

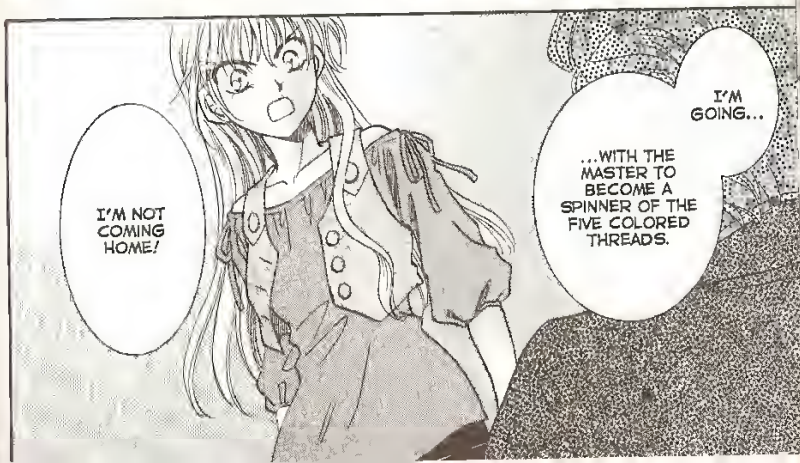
THANK GOODNESS...
I FOUND YOU...

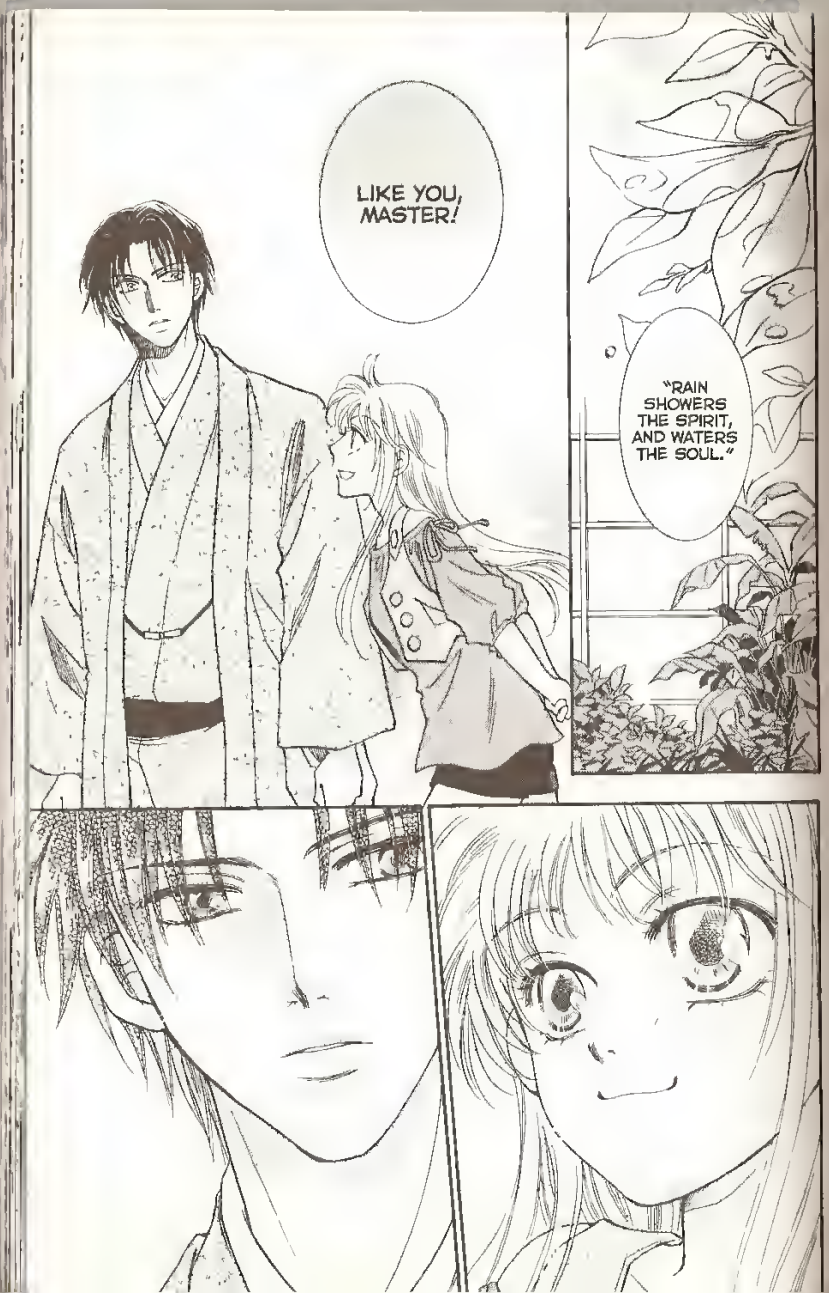
I MAY BE USE-LESS...
...AND INCOMPE-TENT...
...BUT I'M GOING TO WORK HARD TO BECOME SOMETHING.
NOT FOR YOU.
FOR MYSELF!
SO THAT I CAN QUENCH ANOTHER'S PAIN...


F...
FINE! DO WHATEVER YOU WANT!
AND SOME DAY...

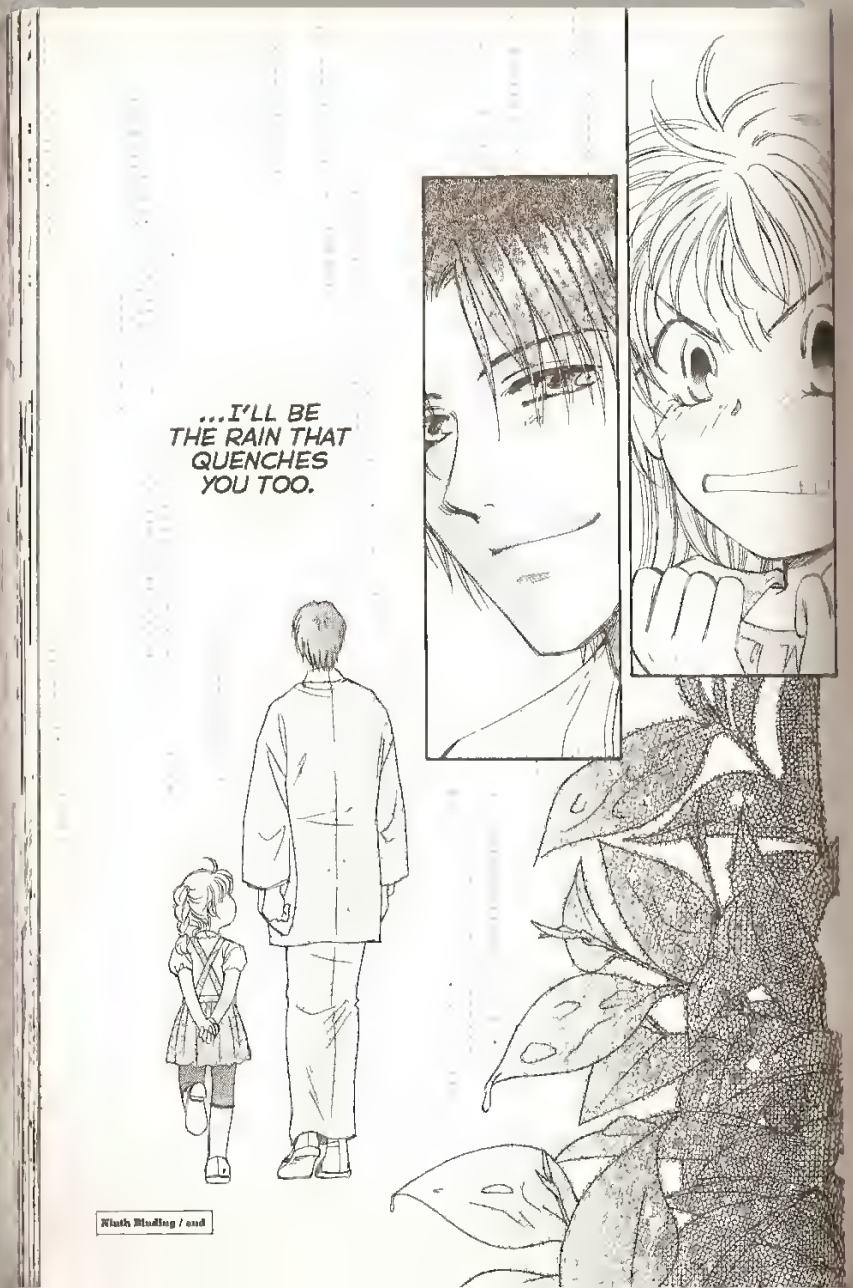

SHE HEALED HER SOUL ...
WOOOW ...
STEP

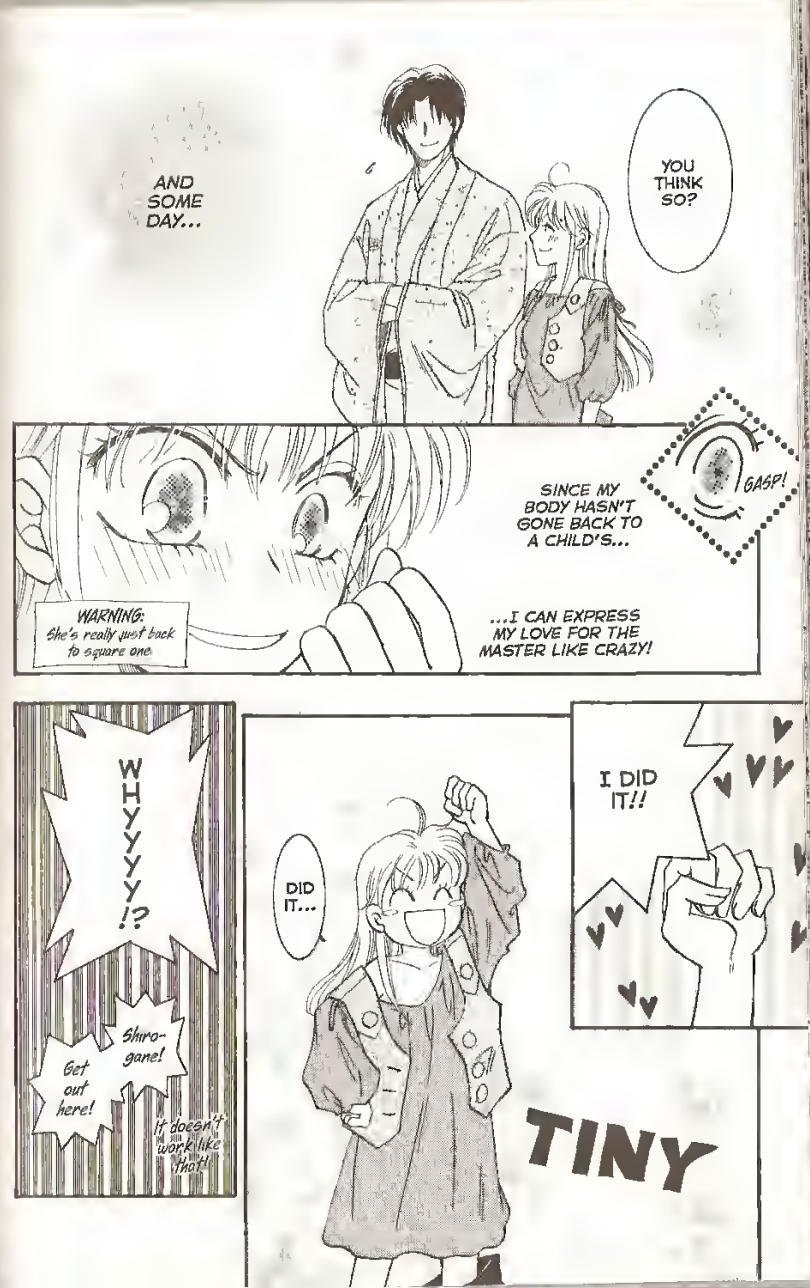

FATHER.
JUMP


I'M NOT COMING HOME!
I'M GOING...
...WITH THE MASTER TO BECOME A SPINNER OF THE FIVE COLORED THREADS.


LIKE YOU, MASTER!
"RAIN SHOWERS THE SPIRIT, AND WATERS THE SOUL."

AND SO...
MY BEST REGARDS FOR A GREAT PARTNERSHIP!
BOW
TSK!
You did, didn't you?
Did you just click your tongue at me?
YOU REMEMBERED ...
...THE FIRST TIME WE MET.
WITHOUT HER ACKNOWLEDGMENT, YOU'LL GET NOWHERE!
TO BECOME A SPINNER, YOU NEED PERMISSION FROM THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY!
Okay, okay...


...I'LL BE THE RAIN THAT QUENCHES YOU TOO.


AND SOME DAY...
YOU THINK SO?
GASP!
SINCE MY BODY HASN'T GONE BACK TO A CHILD'S...
...I CAN EXPRESS MY LOVE FOR THE MASTER LIKE CRAZY!
WARNING: She's really just back to square one.
WHYYYY!?
Shiro-gane!
Get out here!
It doesn't work like that!
I DID IT!!
DID IT...
TINY

Tenth Binding

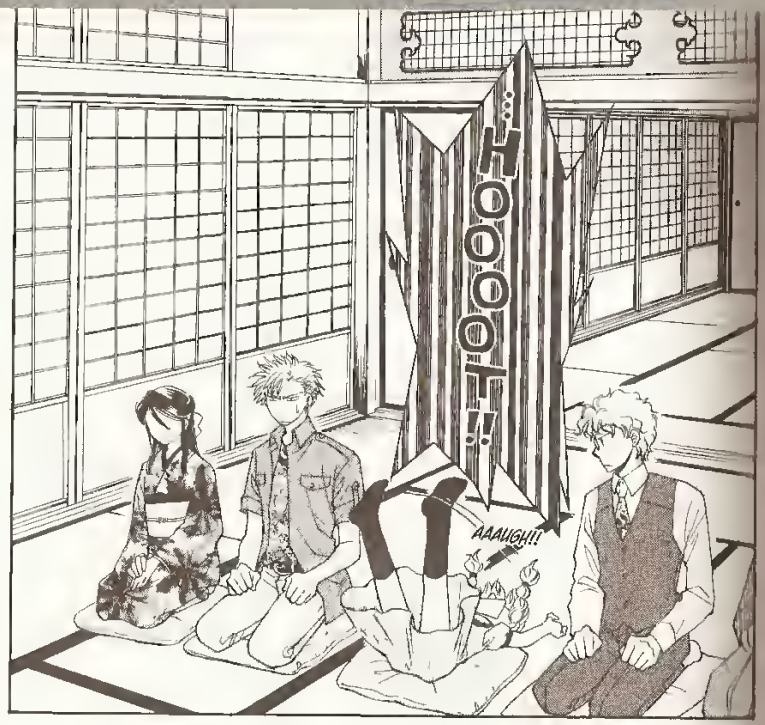
縛りの拾

KOUREN

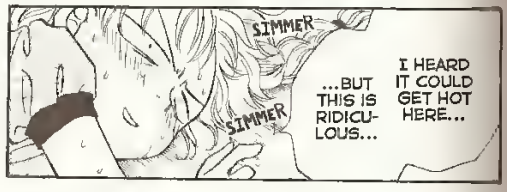
KAORUTAN : SUZAKU

縛りの指

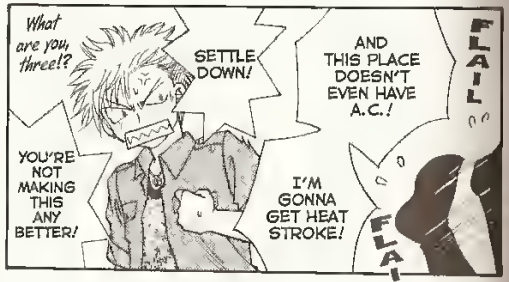
Tenth Binding



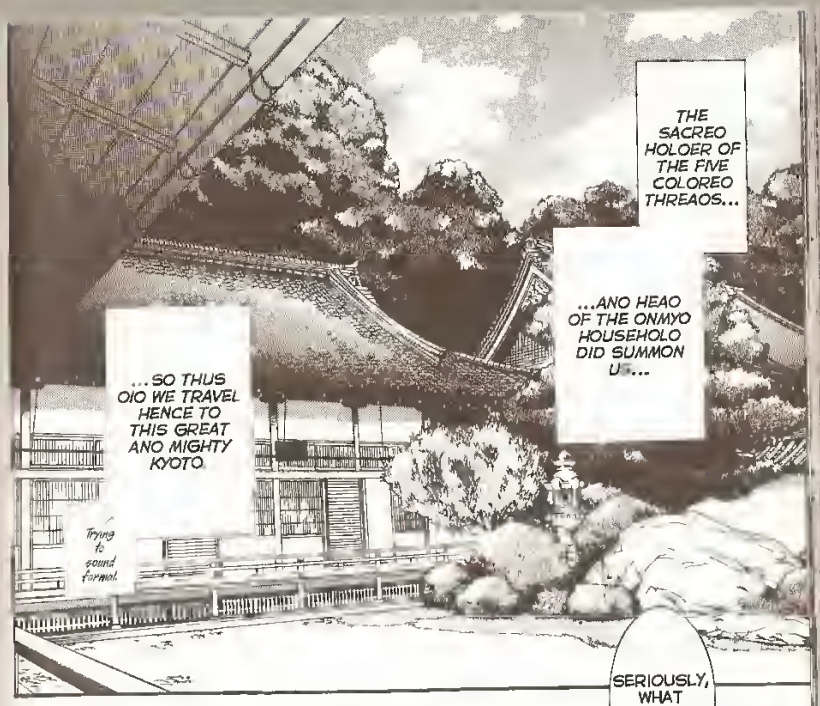
YOU GUESSED IT.

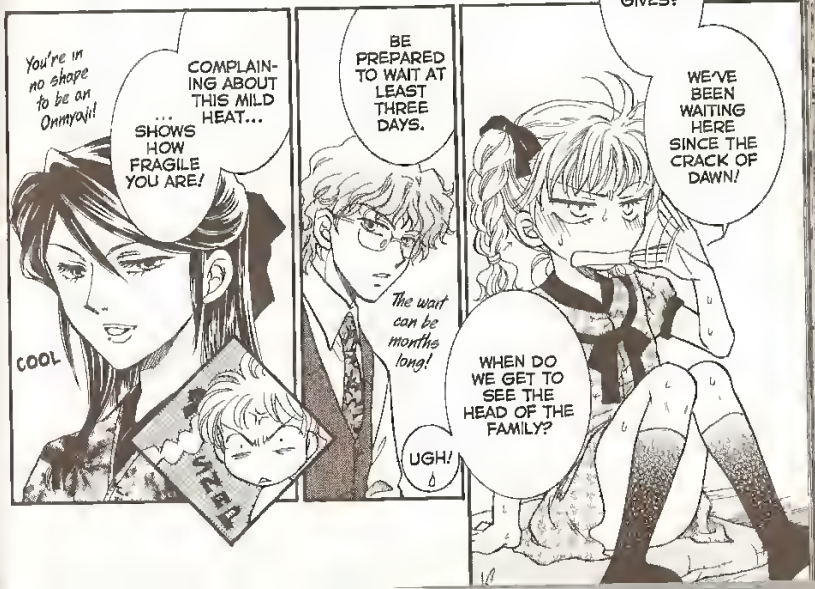


WE'RE IN KYOTO.

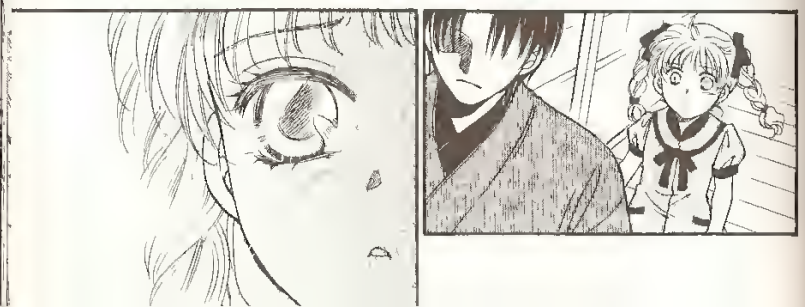


YOU SNEAKY–!!
...ONE OF THESE.
YOINK
ICE PACK
OF COURSE, IT HELPS THAT YOU'RE WEARING...
That's low...
Totally natural
ICE PACK
ICE PACK
I'm wearing two of them, myself.
HEY!
I DIDN'T EVEN WANT TO COME!
ESPECIALLY TO A PLACE THIS STUFFY!
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT, WHEN I'M FORCED TO ACCOMPANY YOU!?
Quiet, you!
LOOM
...I'LL GIVE YOU A SHOULDER RUB, IF YOU LIKE...
IF YOU'RE FEELING SO CRAMPED...

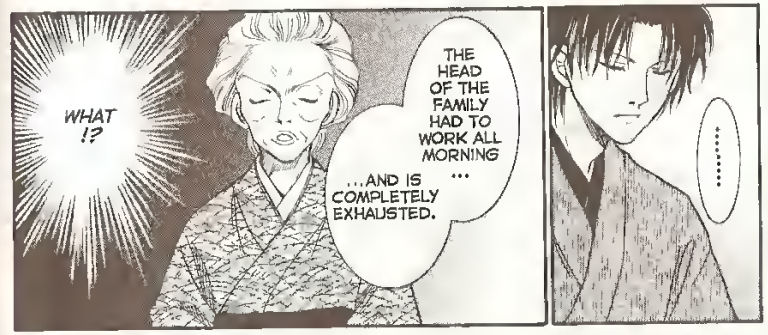

THE SACREO HOLOER OF THE FIVE COLOREO THREAOS...
...ANO HEAO OF THE ONMYO HOUSEHOLO DID SUMMON U...
...SO THUS OIO WE TRAVEL HENCE TO THIS GREAT ANO MIGHTY KYOTO.
Trying to sound formal.


You're in no shape to be an Onmyoji!
COMPLAIN-ING ABOUT THIS MILD HEAT...
...SHOWS HOW FRAGILE YOU ARE!
COOL
VIZ
BE PREPARED TO WAIT AT LEAST THREE DAYS.
The wait can be months long!
UGH!
SERIOUSLY, WHAT GIVES?
WE'VE BEEN WAITING HERE SINCE THE CRACK OF DAWN!
WHEN DO WE GET TO SEE THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY?

WE'RE LEAVING.
STEP
W... WAIT A MINUTE!
AT THIS RATE, WHO KNOWS HOW LONG WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT?
I SAID, WA—
ARE YOU KIDDING ME!?
PLEASE.
TRY AGAIN TOMORROW.
THEY'RE CANCEL-ING!?
TURN

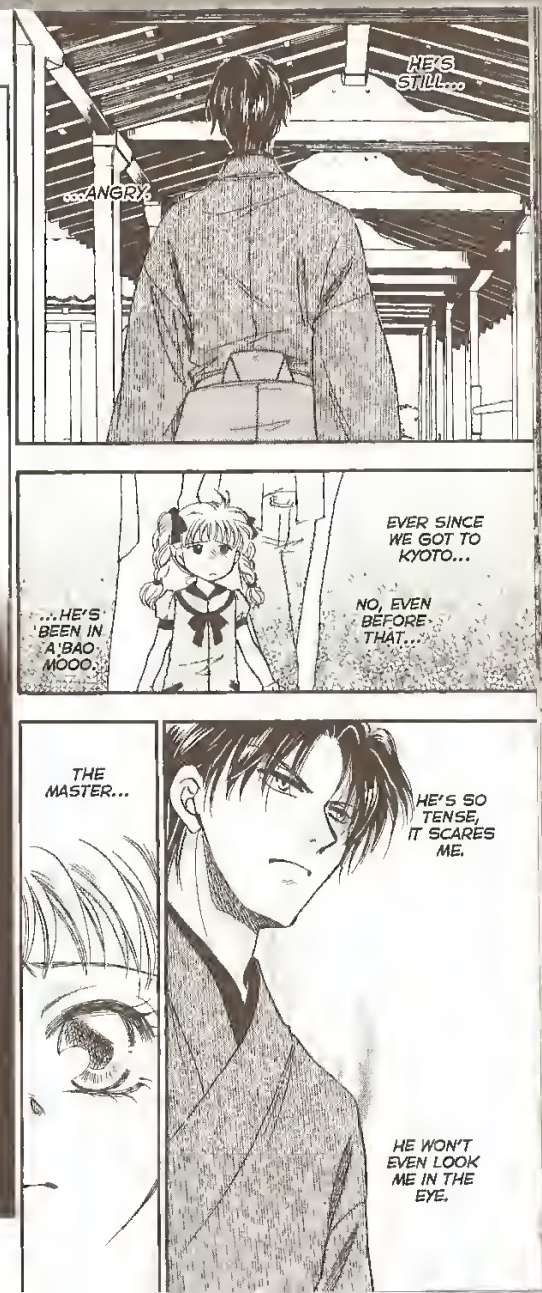


AH!!
GLARE
IS THIS THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY!?
Scaryyy...
OH, I GUESS I'M WRONG.
Tsuna?
I... I-I-I'M FINE!
EEEEK!!
A... W-W-W... AWAJI-SAMA!

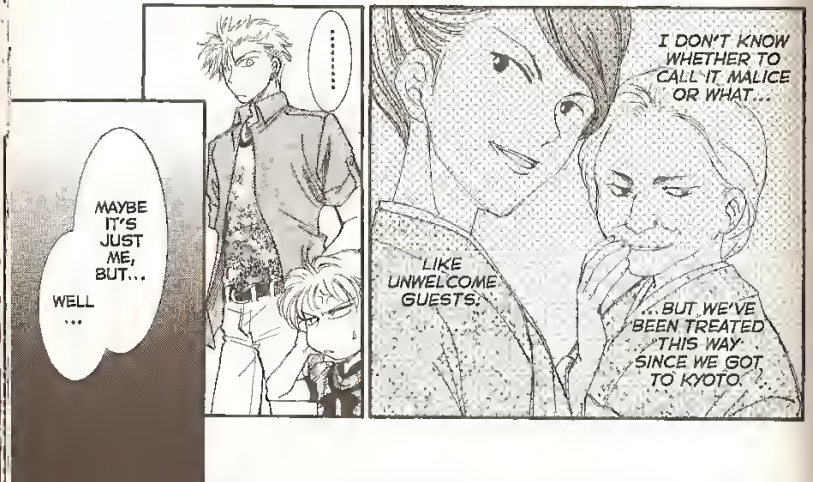

WHAT!?
THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY HAD TO WORK ALL MORNING ...
...AND IS COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED.
.....

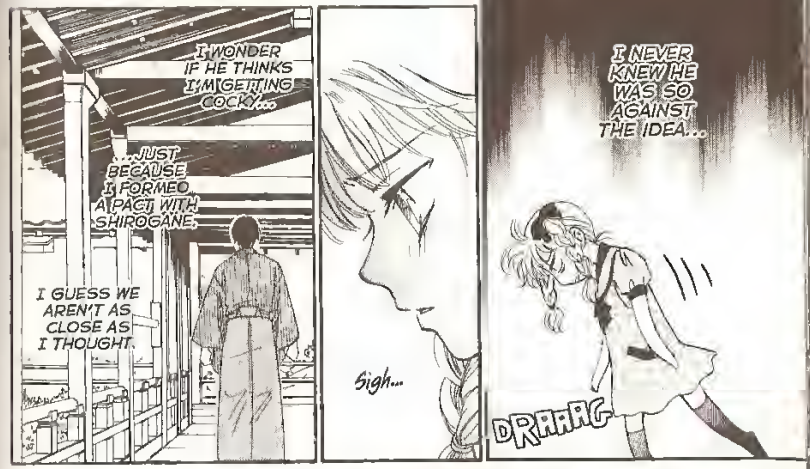
TEACHING YOU CONTROL IS NOT ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT YOU BECOME AN ONMYOJI.
BUT MASTER...
ACCIDENT OR NOT, YOUR PACT WITH SHIROGANE...
...IS DANGEROUS AS LONG AS YOU CAN'T CONTROL IT.
I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO TEACH ME HOW TO USE SHIROGANE-
THE TRUTH IS...
I JUST WANT TO BE HELPFUL TO HIM.
...I PROMISE I'LL...
I DON'T WANT YOU ANY MORE INVOLVED THAN YOU ALREADY ARE!

...IS COMPLETELY AGAINST MY BECOMING AN ONMYOJI.
WHY!?


HE'S STILL...
...ANGRY.
...HE'S BEEN IN A BAD MOOD.
EVER SINCE WE GOT TO KYOTO...
NO, EVEN BEFORE THAT...
THE MASTER...
HE'S SO TENSE, IT SCARES ME.
HE WON'T EVEN LOOK ME IN THE EYE.

Hee Hee!
TRIP
WHOA!
Heh
ONE OF THE THREAD MEMBERS.
SHE'S JUST A KID.
Heh
Heh
THAT MUST BE HER.
Close one!
NOT AGAIN.

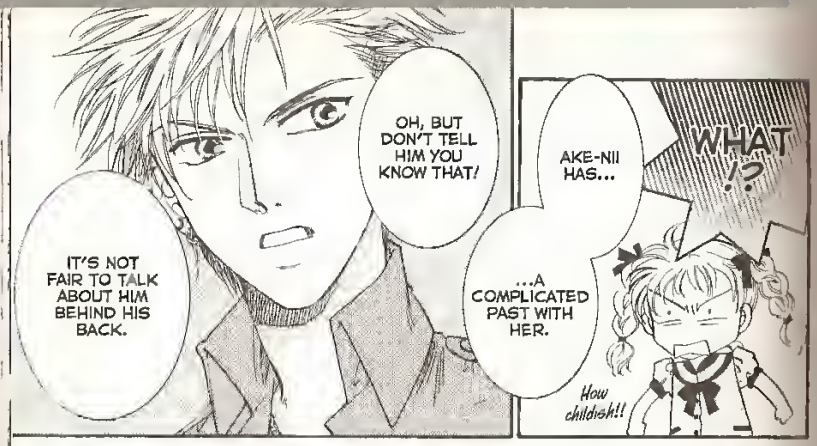

.....
MAYBE IT'S JUST ME, BUT...
WELL ...
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO CALL IT MALICE OR WHAT...
LIKE UNWELCOME GUESTS.
.. BUT WE'VE BEEN TREATED THIS WAY SINCE WE GOT TO KYOTO.

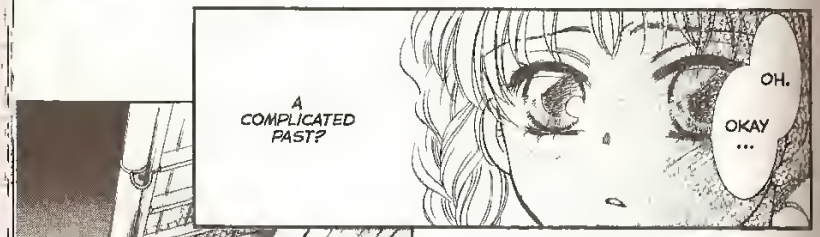

I WONDER IF HE THINKS I'M GETTING COCKY...
JUST BECAUSE I FORMED A PACT WITH SHIROGANE.
I GUESS WE AREN'T AS CLOSE AS I THOUGHT.
Sigh...
I NEVER KNEW HE WAS SO AGAINST THE IDEA...
DRAAG

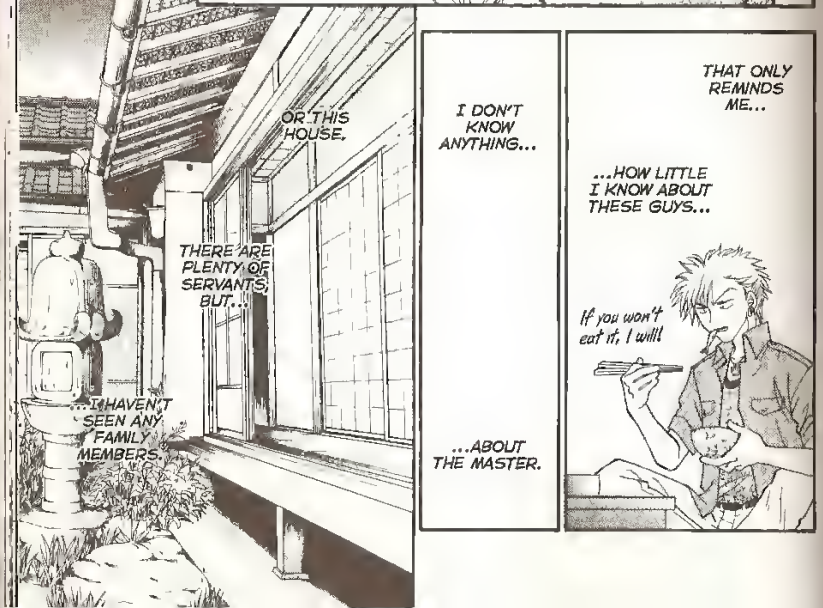
WHEN HE SAID HE'D PROTECT ME...
...WHAT DID HE MEAN?

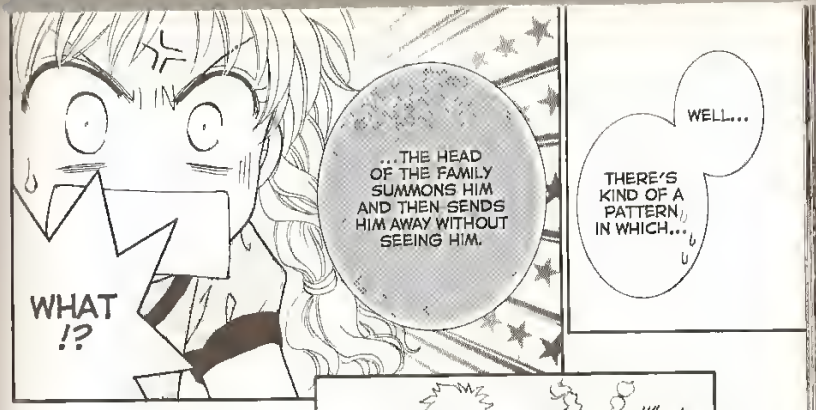
THIS FAMILY PLACES HUGE VALUE ON SOCIAL STATUS.
THEY PRIDE THEMSELVES ON THEIR ANCIENT PEDIGREE.
Can't you tell?
TSUNA?
YOU'RE DISCRIMI-NATED AGAINST TOO?
I'M NOT...
...HUNGRY ANYMORE.
CLACK
...I SHOULO NEVER HAVE COME.
MAYBE...
TREATED BADLY!?
...I DON'T BLAME HIM FOR BEING IN A BAD MOOD.
SINCE HE'S TREATED SO BADLY WHENEVER HE COMES HERE...
OH WELL.
CHOMP
COME ON, NOT YOU TOO, CHIKO.
AKE-NII DIDN'T SHOW UP EITHER.

...EVEN THE MENU...
...DOESN'T FEEL VERY WELCOMING.
Like they're trying to drive us out with awful food.
And it's already cold.
WHEN I GOT HERE, I DISCOVEREO ...
YOU'D THINK GETTING TO STAY IN HIS HOME...
To be honest
...WOULD BE A THRILLING OPPOR-TUNITY.
IF YOU COMPLAIN ABOUT THIS KIND OF TREAT-MENT...
... YOU'LL NEVER SURVIVE HERE.
...THE MASTER, AYA-SAN, AND ISORA-SAN ARE OIRECTLY RELATEO TO THE HEAD FAMLY.
THEY'RE FROM KYOTO.
ON THE OTHER HANO, TSUNA'S FROM A BRANCH FAMLY ANO GREW UP SOMEWHERE ELSE.
THE TWO OF US ARE THE ONLY ACTUAL GUESTS IN THE MASTER'S HOME.


IT'S NOT FAIR TO TALK ABOUT HIM BEHIND HIS BACK.
OH, BUT DON'T TELL HIM YOU KNOW THAT!
AKE-NII HAS...
...A COMPLICATED PAST WITH HER.
WHAT !?
How childish!!

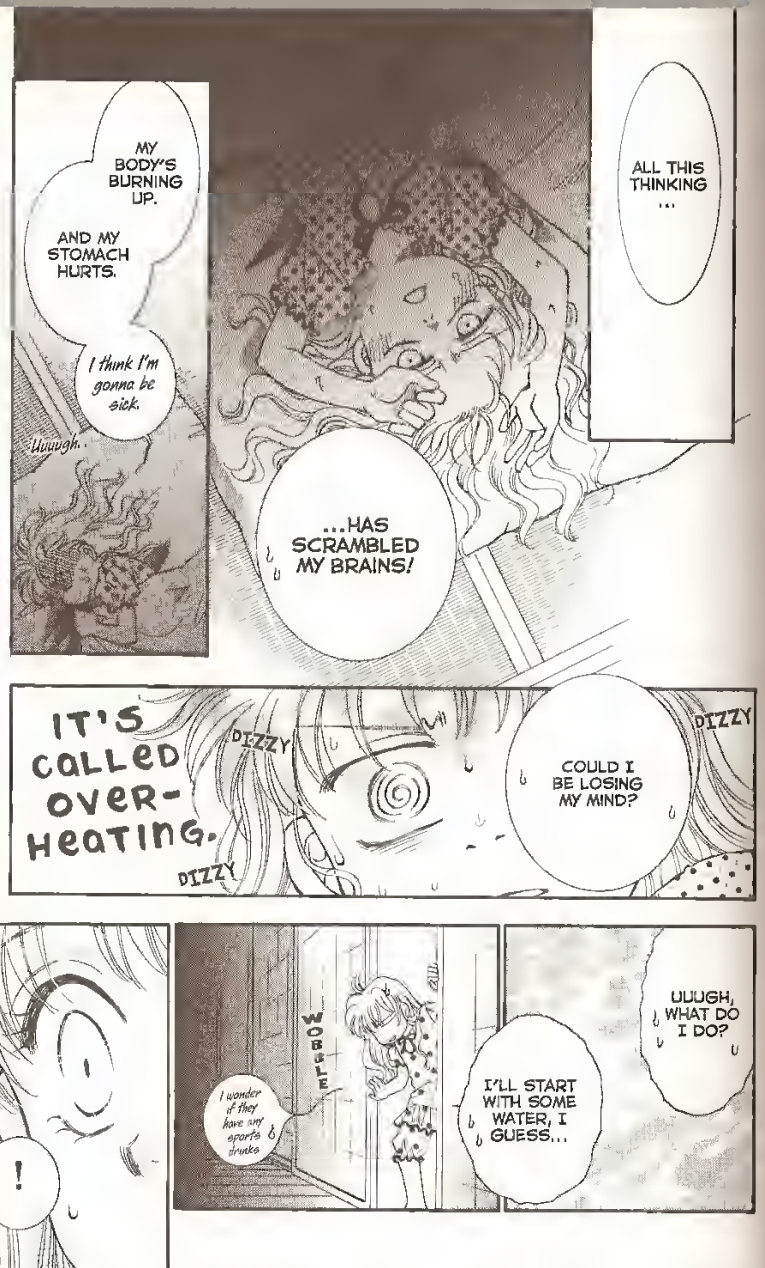

A COMPLICATED PAST?
OH.
OKAY ...


...I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY FAMILY MEMBERS.
THERE ARE PLENTY OF SERVANTS, BUT...
OR THIS HOUSE.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING...
...ABOUT THE MASTER.
THAT ONLY REMINDS ME...
...HOW LITTLE I KNOW ABOUT THESE GUYS...
If you won't eat it, I will!

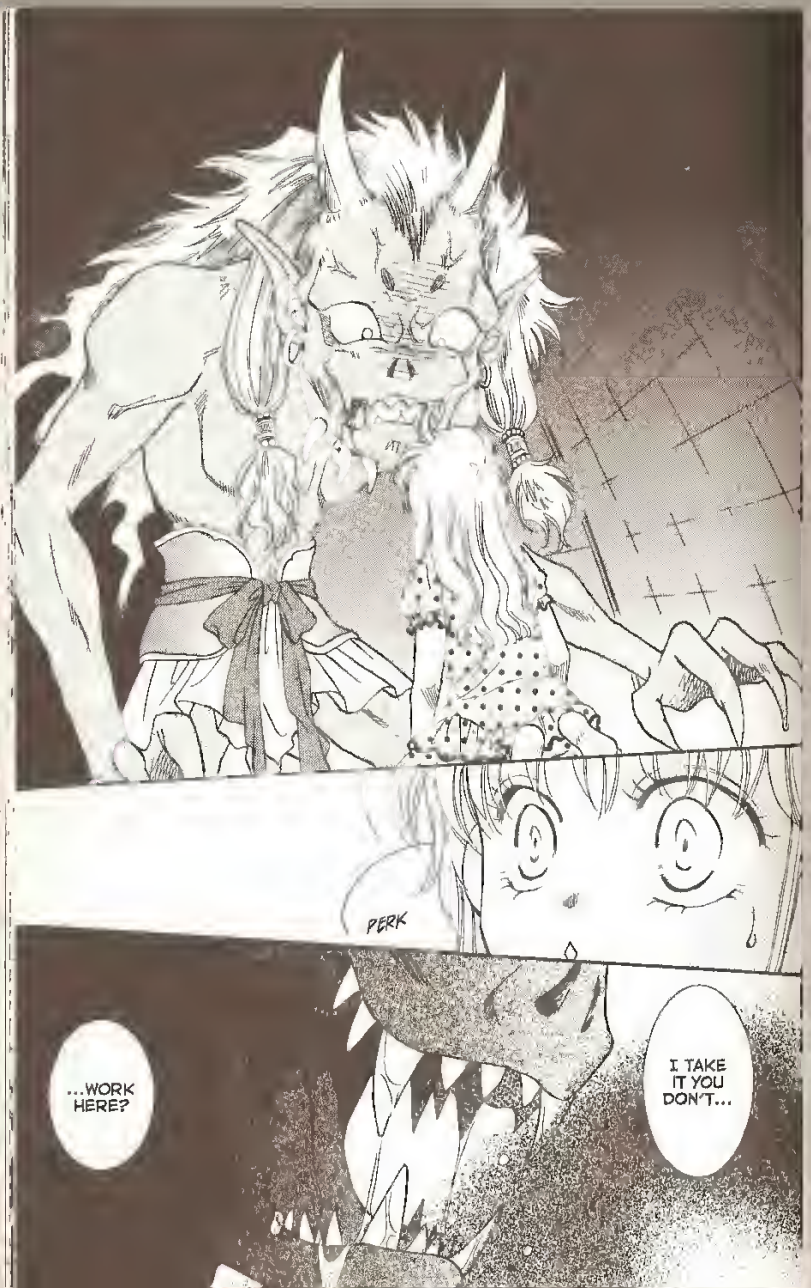

WHAT !?
...THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY SUMMONS HIM AND THEN SENDS HIM AWAY WITHOUT SEEING HIM.
WELL... THERE'S KIND OF A PATTERN IN WHICH...

The Head of the Family, duh.
Who does she think she is!?

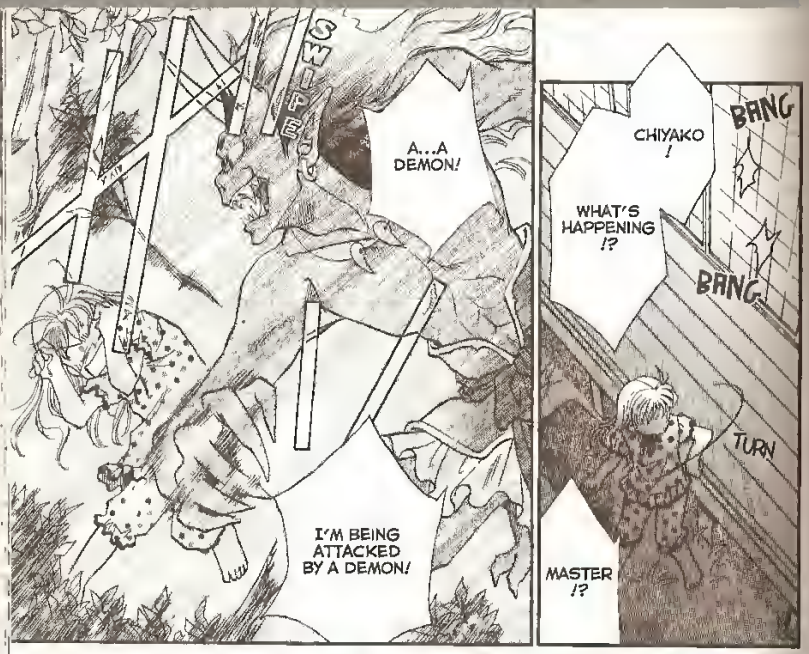
THE TRUTH IS...
WELL ...
WHY WOULD SHE DO THAT?
...DON'T GET ALONG!
...THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY AND AKE-NII...

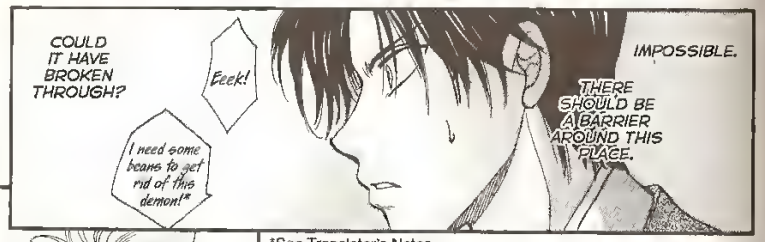

MY BODY'S BURNING UP.
AND MY STOMACH HURTS.
I think I'm gonna be sick.
Uuuugh.
ALL THIS THINKING ...
...HAS SCRAMBLED MY BRAINS!
IT'S CALLED OVER-HEATING.
DIZZY
DIZZY
DIZZY
COULD I BE LOSING MY MIND?
!
I wonder if they have any sports drinks
WORLD
I'LL START WITH SOME WATER, I GUESS...
UUUGH, WHAT DO I DO?

IS MY DESIRE TO KNOW HIM BETTER...
...JUST ANNOYING HIM?
WHAT DOES HE THINK 'BOUT?
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE REALLY?
AND WHAT DOES HE THINK ABOUT ME?
I DON'T WANT YOU ANY MORE INVOLVED THAN YOU ALREADY ARE!
ACHE

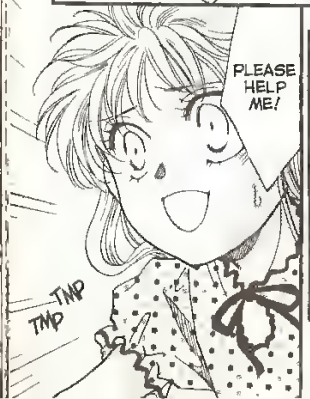

PERK
...WORK HERE?
I TAKE IT YOU DON'T...

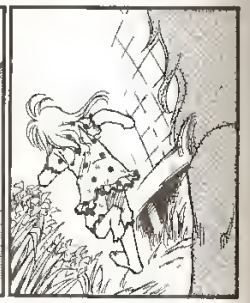
HUH?
SOMEONE'S THERE.
I GUESS HE'S STILL UP.
THE MASTER'S LIGHT IS STILL ON.
SHE MUST BE PART OF THE STAFF.
SNEAK
SNEAK
WHY'S SHE ACTING SO SNEAKY?
OH.
THANK YOU SO MUCH...
REACH
!
I'M SERIOUSLY REACHING MY LIMIT...
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
UUUUGH...

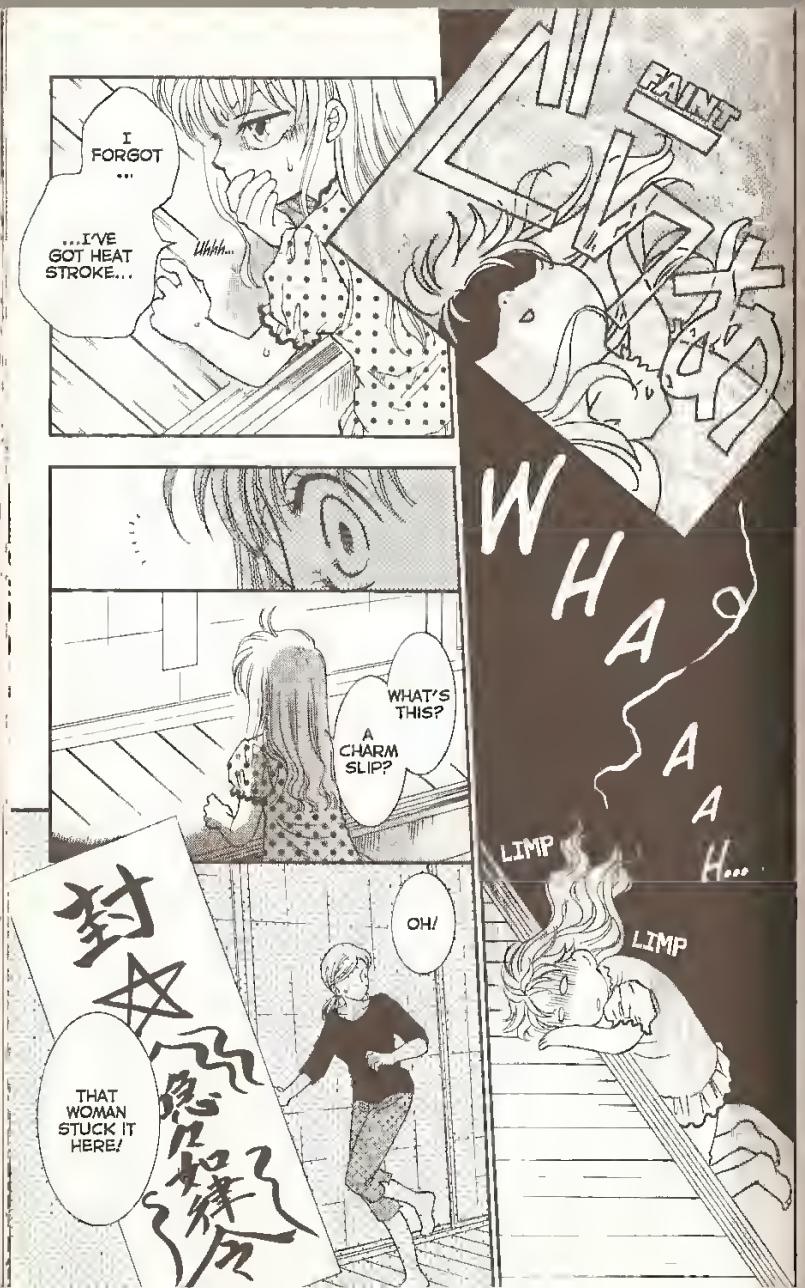


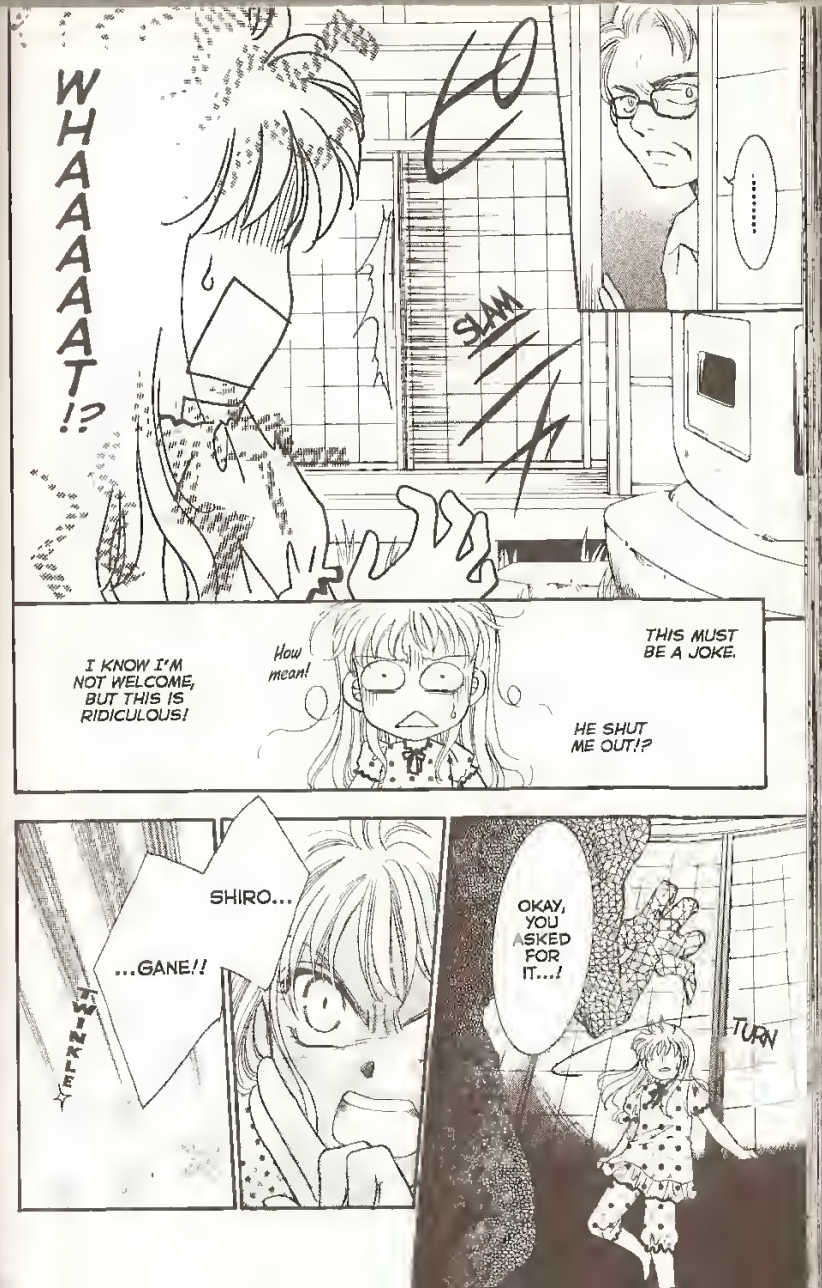

COULD IT HAVE BROKEN THROUGH?
Eeek!
I need some beans to get rid of this demon!*
IMPOSSIBLE.
THERE SHOULD BE A BARRIER AROUND THIS PLACE.

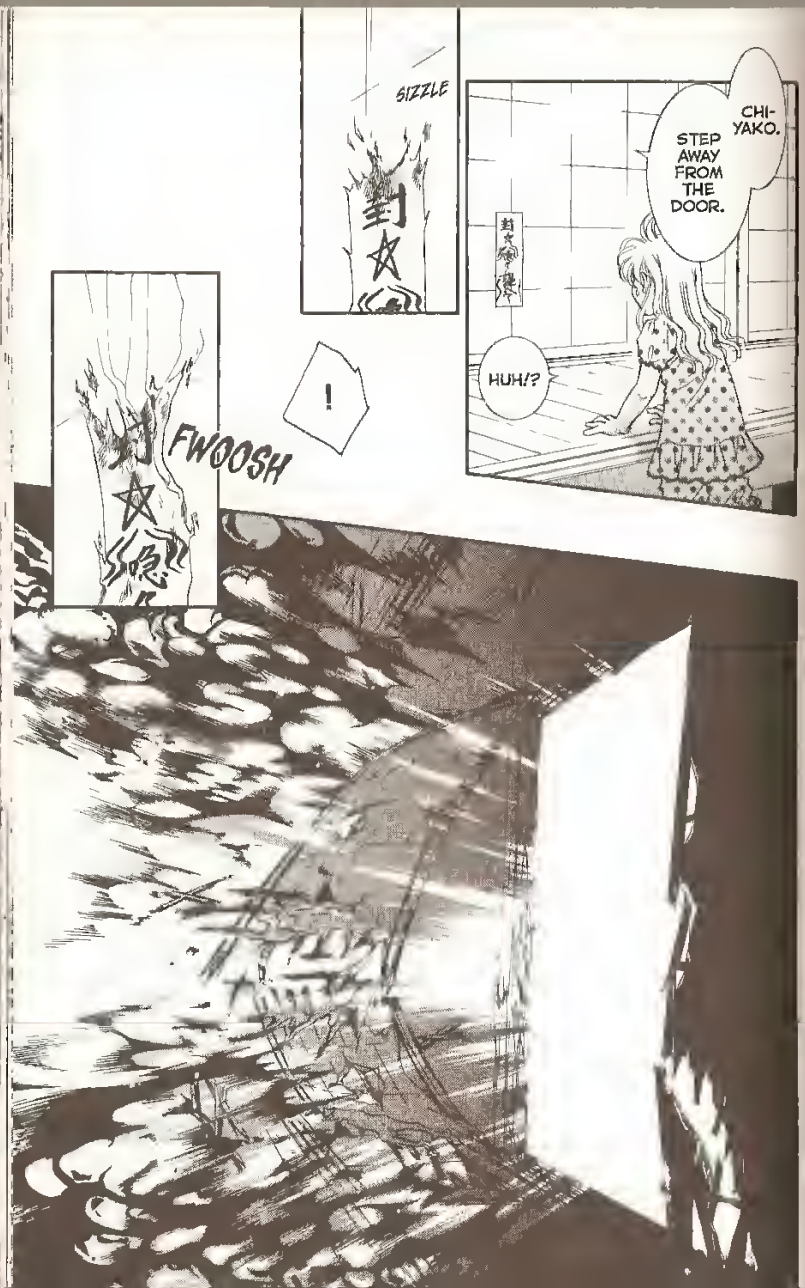
*See Translator's Notes





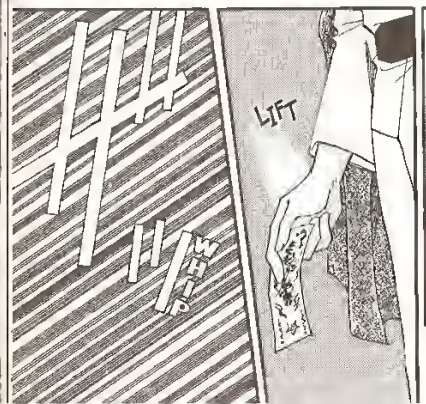

I FORGOT ...
...I'VE GOT HEAT STROKE...
Uhhh...
FAINT
WHAAAA
H...
LIMP
LIMP
WHAT'S THIS?
A CHARM SLIP?
OH!
THAT WOMAN STUCK IT HERE!
封
急々如律令

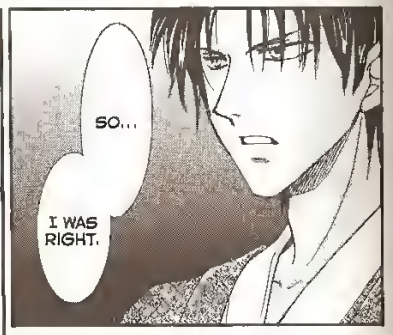

WHAAAAAT!?
SLAM
.....
I KNOW I'M NOT WELCOME, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS!
How mean!
THIS MUST BE A JOKE.
HE SHUT ME OUT!?
SHIRO...
...GANE!!
SWINKLE
OKAY, YOU ASKED FOR IT...!
TURN


SIZZLE
封
CHI-YAKO.
STEP AWAY FROM THE DOOR.
HUH!?
!
FWOOSH

THE OEMON OIDN'T BREAK THROUGH THE BARRIER!
A CHARM
I SEE NOW!
SOMEONE IN THE HOUSE USED THIS TO INVITE IT IN!
OF ALL THE...
A PLAN THIS DEVIOUS MEANS ONLY ONE PERSON.
THAT...
...WITCH!

MAS...
CHILL
MASTER !?

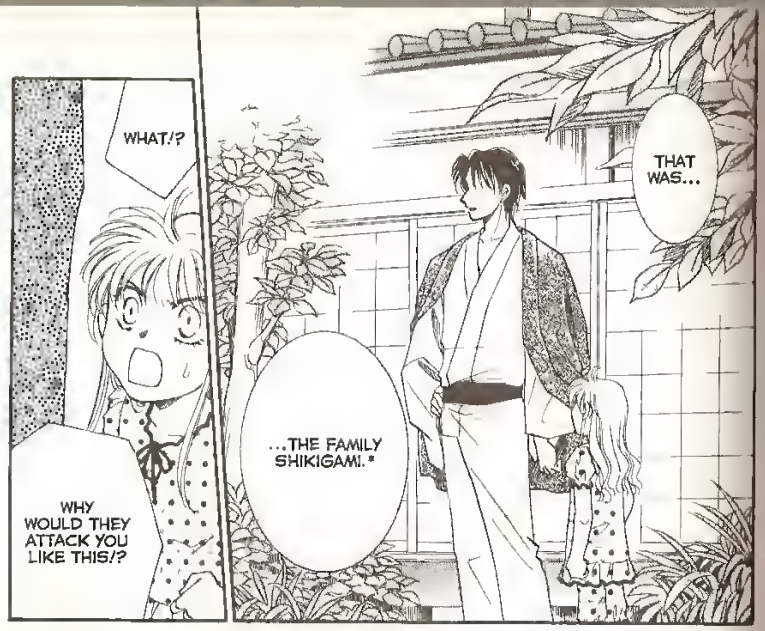

LIFT


SO...
I WAS RIGHT.

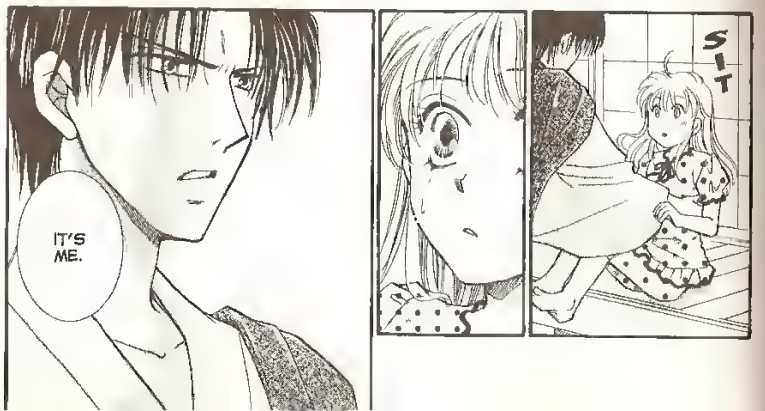
STANCE

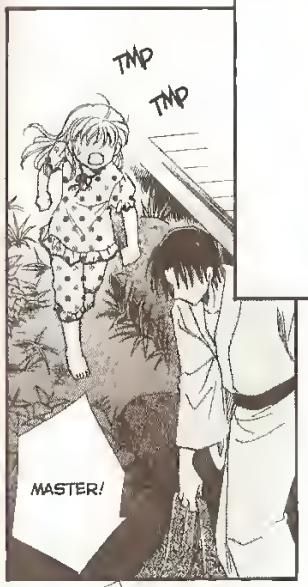
YOU HAVE NOT BEEN FORGIVEN...
DON'T FORGET...
FLUSH
BOOM

SLAP
IF YOU DON'T LIKE ME, COME AND GET ME YOURSELF!
TAKE YOUR SICK PRANKS SOMEWHERE ELSE!
DON'T FORGET...

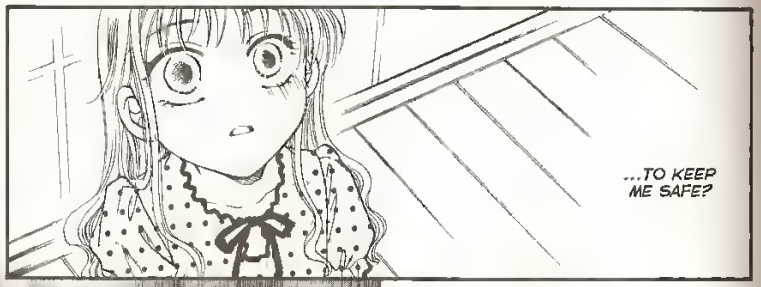


*See Translator's Notes



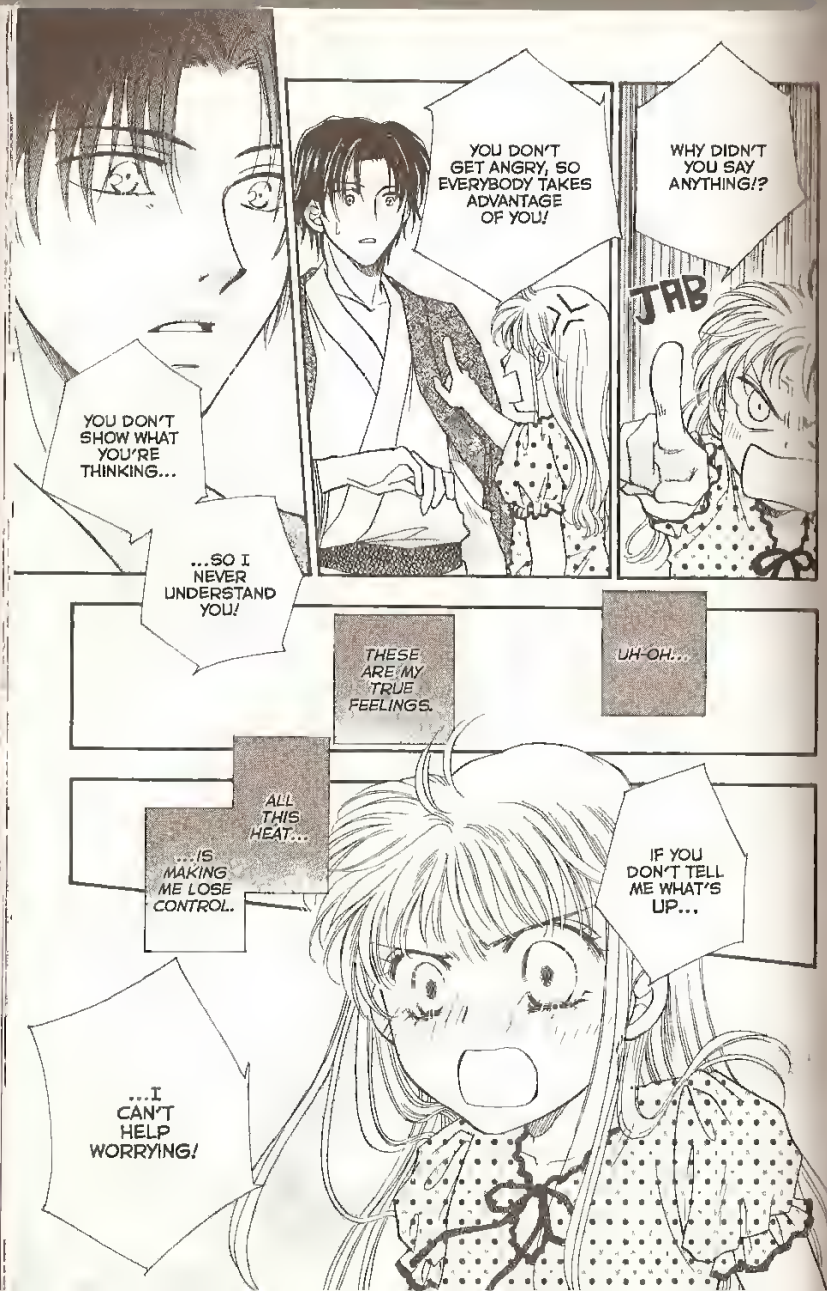


I KNEW THAT IF YOU STAYED NEAR ME...
...YOU'D GET HURT TOO.
THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO BRING YOU TO KYOTO.
WAIT, SO HE DION'T WANT ME INVOLVED...
SINCE HE'S TREATED SO BADLY WHENEVER HE COMES HERE...
SINCE I WIELD ONE OF THE THREADS...
...THEY CAN'T PUBLICLY REMOVE ME FROM THE FAMILY.


...TO KEEP ME SAFE?

ALL OF THOSE HATEFUL LOOKS...
WEREN'T AIMED AT ME.
THEY WERE AIMED AT THE MASTER.

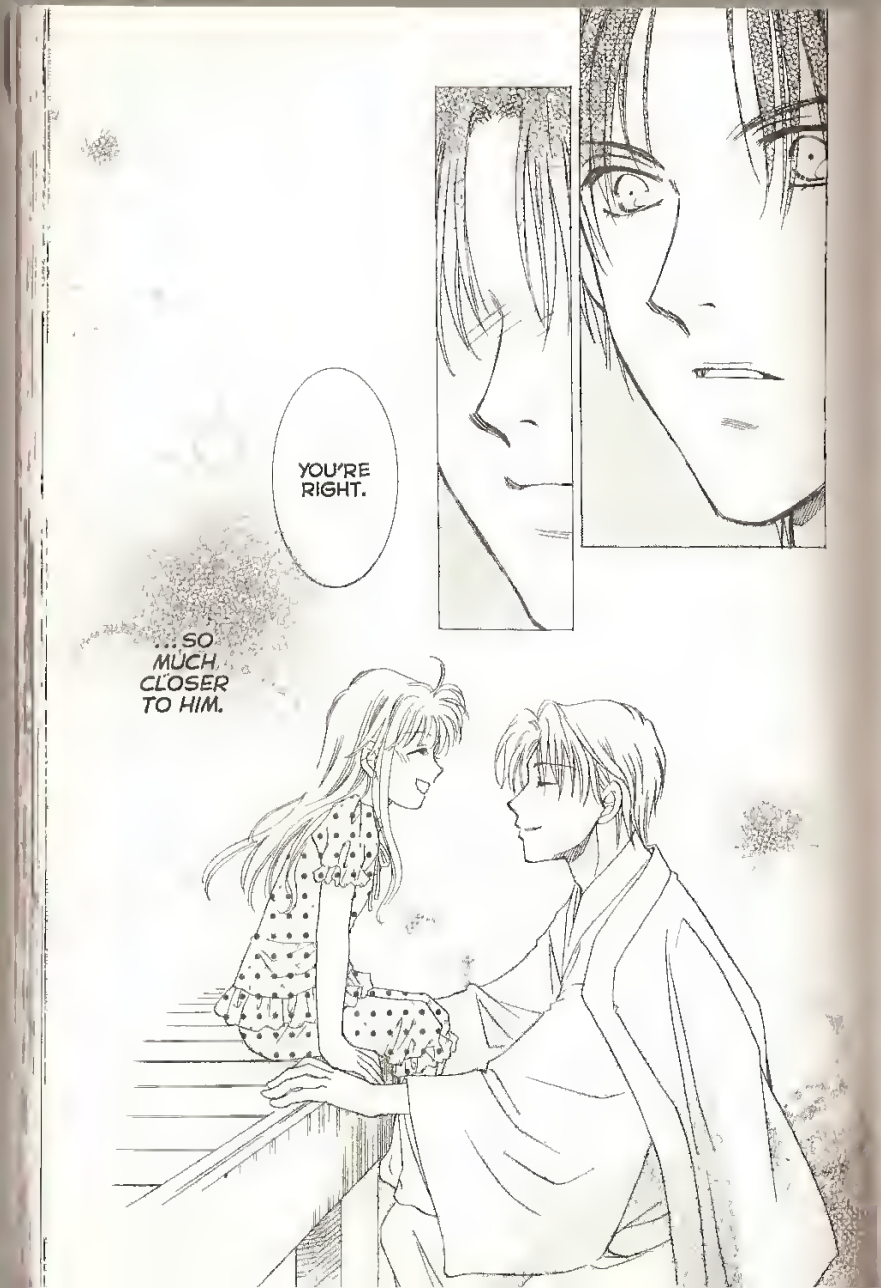
THE HEAD FAMILY CONSIDERS ME...
...AN UNPARDONABLE CRIMINAL.
I SHOULDN'T EVEN EXIST.

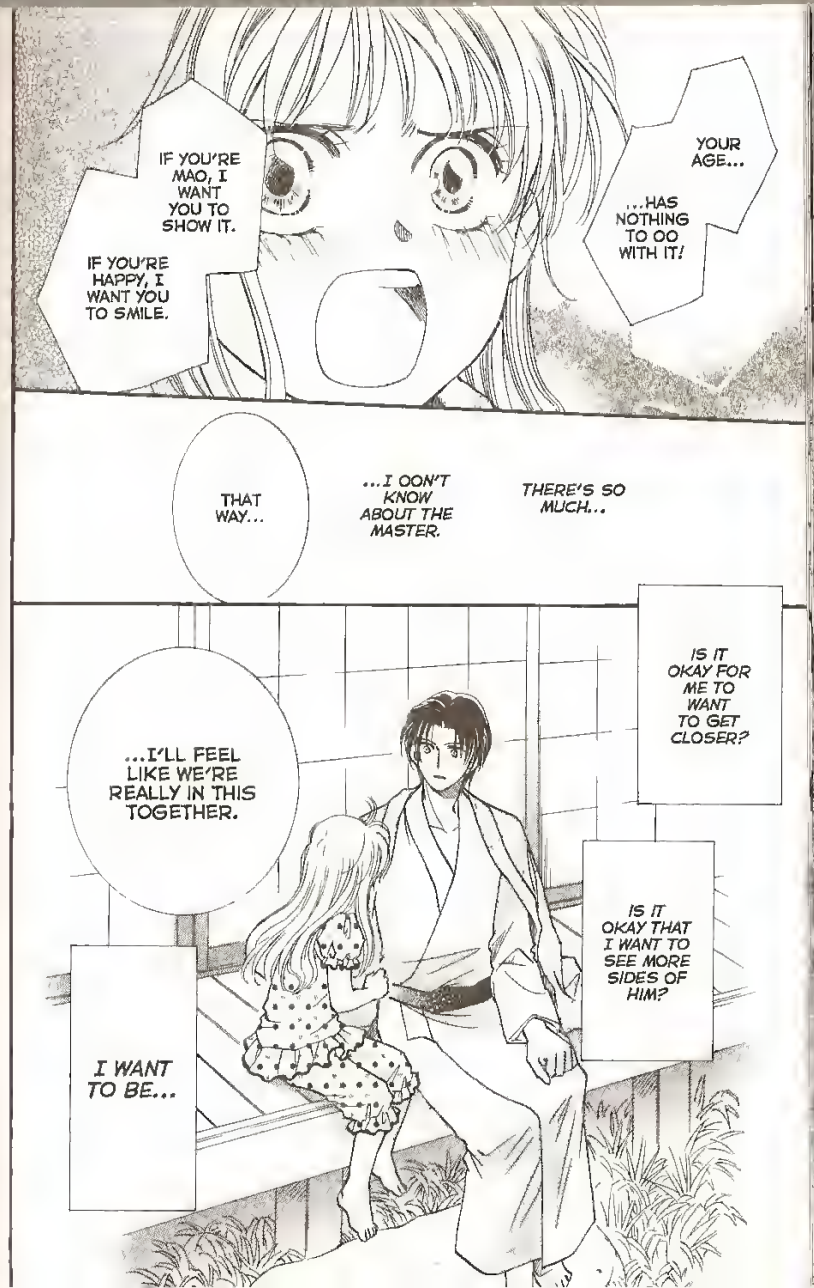

YOU DON'T SHOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING...
...SO I NEVER UNDERSTAND YOU!
YOU DON'T GET ANGRY, SO EVERYBODY TAKES ADVANTAGE OF YOU!
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING!?
TAB
THESE ARE MY TRUE FEELINGS.
UH-OH...
ALL THIS HEAT...
...IS MAKING ME LOSE CONTROL.
IF YOU DON'T TELL ME WHAT'S UP...
...I CAN'T HELP WORRYING!

RAAAGE
THAT'S...
I DON'T EXACTLY UNDERSTAND YOUR SITUATION, BUT...
...HARASSING YOU FROM THE SHADOWS IS JUST COWARDLY!
AND GANGING UP ON YOU LIKE THIS!
THAT'S SO MEAN!

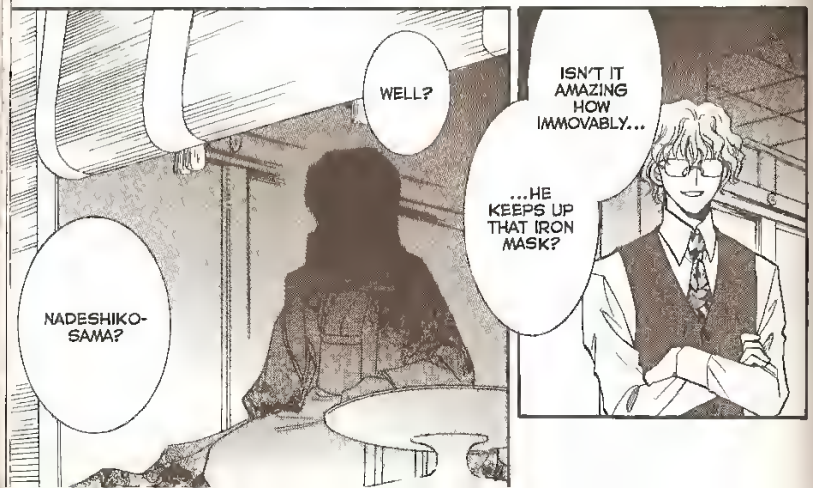
...IN THE PAST ...
...I'VE GOTTEN VIOLENT TOO EASILY.
OH MY...
THE MASTER'S ACTUALLY BEING VULNERABLE!
...GOD!!
THIS IS A FIRST!!
THUMP

THIS GUY...
...IS HOPELESS.
DIZZY
DIZZY
I'm not sure if the heat caused my headache or what...
SINCE YOU'RE ALREADY MAD, THERE'S NO POINT IN ME GETTING MAD, TOO.
WELL ...
UH...
...I'D RATHER ACT MY AGE...
...AND TAKE MY PUNISH-MENT.
I DON'T LET CONFLICT UPSET ME BECAUSE...
...MAY NOT BE GALLANT, BUT...
EITHER WAY...
ACTING THIS WAY...


YOU'RE RIGHT.
...SO MUCH CLOSER TO HIM.


IF YOU'RE MAO, I WANT YOU TO SHOW IT.
IF YOU'RE HAPPY, I WANT YOU TO SMILE.
YOUR AGE...
...HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT!
THAT WAY...
...I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE MASTER.
THERE'S SO MUCH...
...I'LL FEEL LIKE WE'RE REALLY IN THIS TOGETHER.
I WANT TO BE...
IS IT OKAY FOR ME TO WANT TO GET CLOSER?
IS IT OKAY THAT I WANT TO SEE MORE SIDES OF HIM?

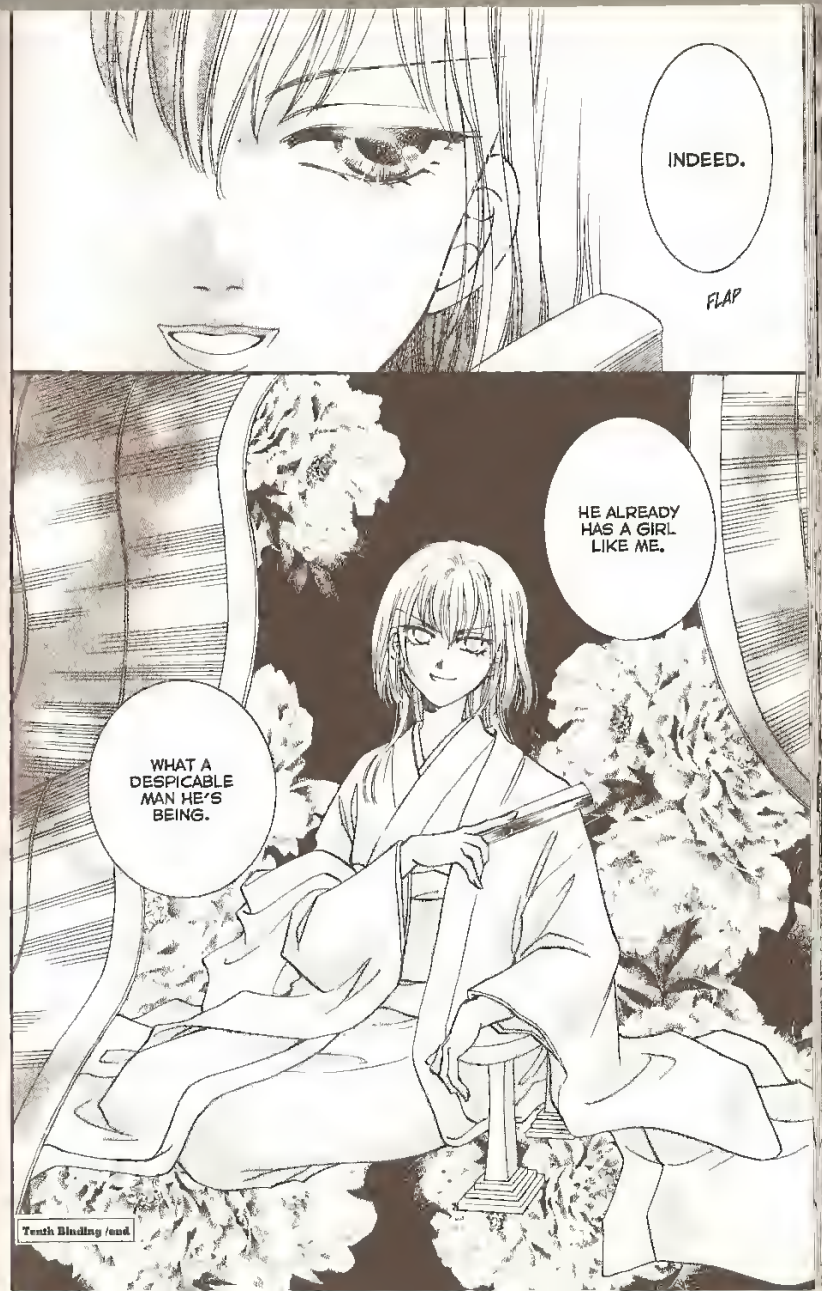
I FAILED YOU...
GREAT HEAD...
AWAJI-SAMA.
IT WAS WORTH IT, TO SEE AKEO-SAN IN ACTION.
I KNOW. BUT DON'T WORRY.

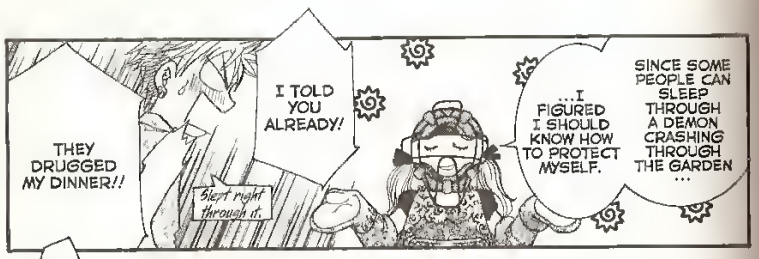

WELL?
NADESHIKO-SAMA?
ISN'T IT AMAZING HOW IMMOVABLY...
...HE KEEPS UP THAT IRON MASK?

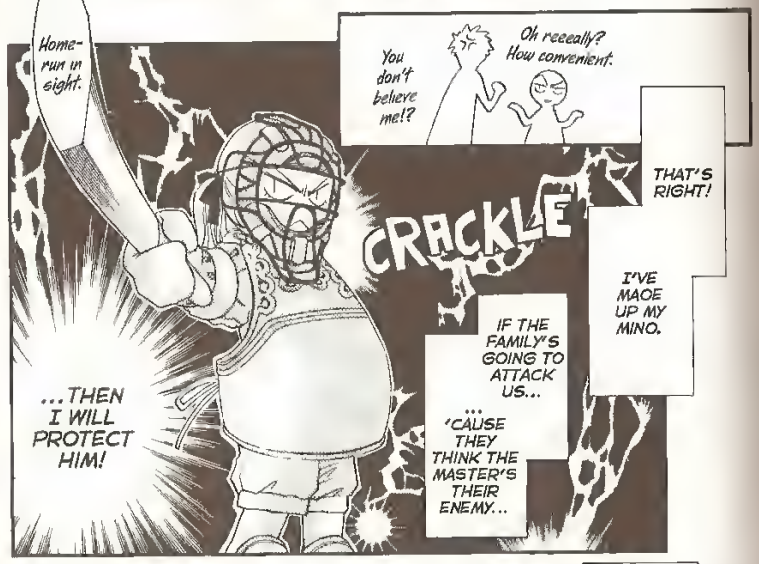
SPLISH

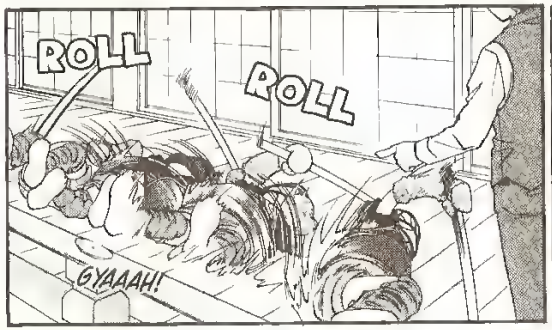
... AKEO-SAN WILL GO CRAZY.
IF YOU GO AFTER CHIKO-CHAN...
I TOLD YOU.
WRAP

Eleventh Binding
縛りの拾壱
しばりのじゅういち


INDEED.
FLAP
HE ALREADY HAS A GIRL LIKE ME.
WHAT A DESPICABLE MAN HE'S BEING.
Tenth Binding /end


THEY DRUGGED MY DINNER!!
I TOLD YOU ALREADY!
Slept right through it.
...I FIGURED I SHOULD KNOW HOW TO PROTECT MYSELF.
SINCE SOME PEOPLE CAN SLEEP THROUGH A DEMON CRASHING THROUGH THE GARDEN ...

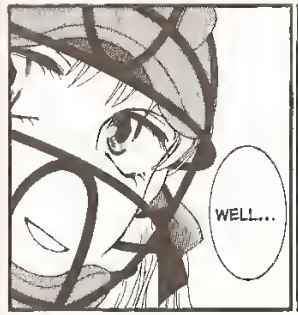

Home-run in sight.
You don't believe me!?
Oh reeeally? How convenient.
CRACKLE
THAT'S RIGHT!
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.
IF THE FAMILY'S GOING TO ATTACK US...
...'CAUSE THEY THINK THE MASTER'S THEIR ENEMY...
...THEN I WILL PROTECT HIM!

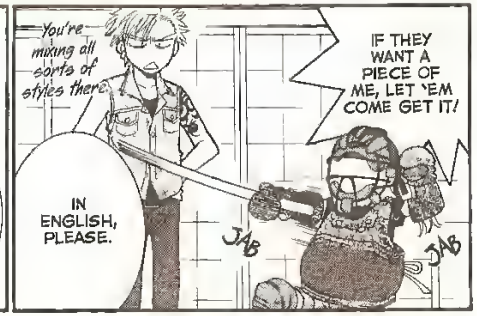

ROLL
ROLL
GYAAAH!

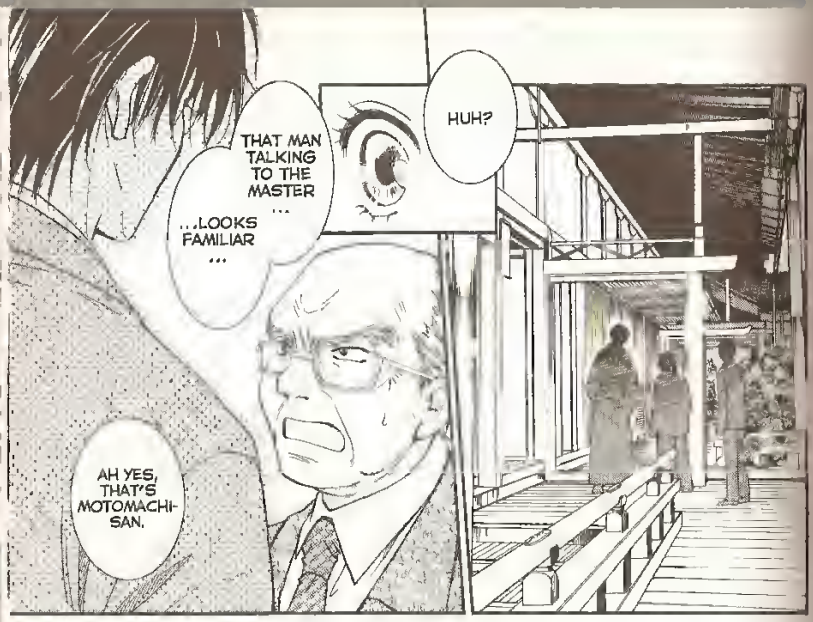
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS...
TRIP
GOT-CHA!

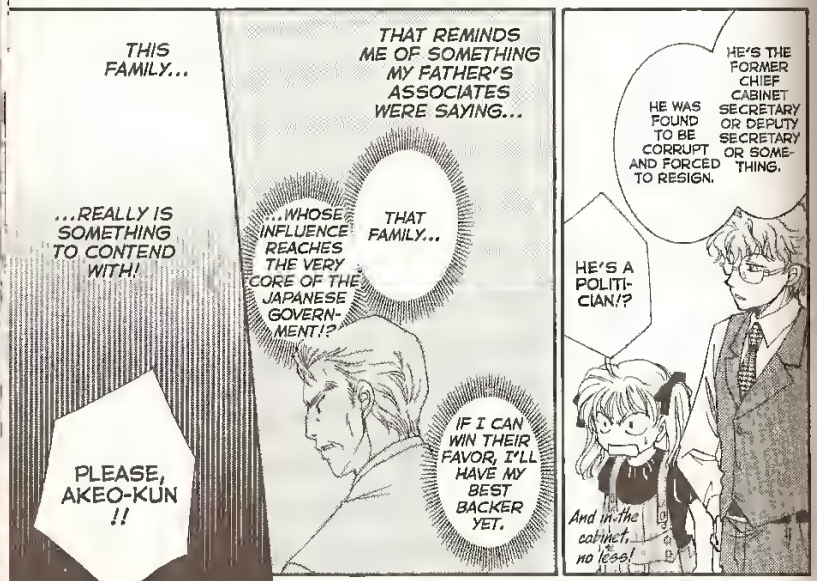
WHAT...
...ARE YOU WEARING?

I'M READY TO TAKE ON THE WORLD!
Translation: Don't try to stop me!
BADUM

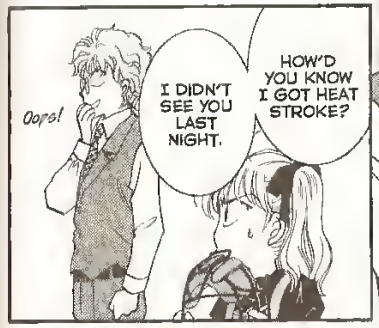

WELL...


You're mixing all sorts of styles there.
IF THEY WANT A PIECE OF ME, LET 'EM COME GET IT!
IN ENGLISH, PLEASE.
JAB
JAB

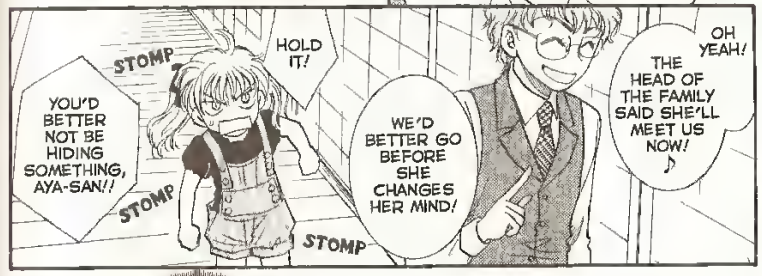

HUH?
THAT MAN TALKING TO THE MASTER ...
...LOOKS FAMILIAR ...
AH YES, THAT'S MOTOMACHI-SAN.

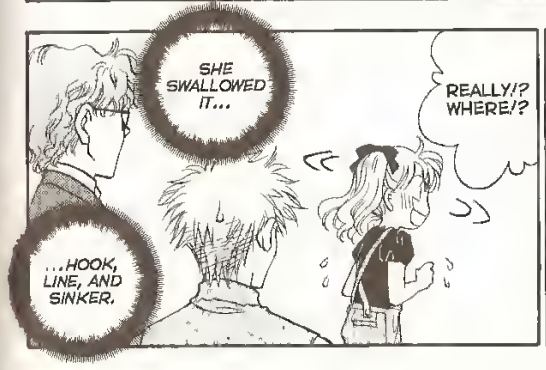

THIS FAMILY...
...REALLY IS SOMETHING TO CONTEND WITH!
PLEASE, AKEO-KUN !!
THAT REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING MY FATHER'S ASSOCIATES WERE SAYING...
...WHOSE INFLUENCE REACHES THE VERY CORE OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT!?
THAT FAMILY...
IF I CAN WIN THEIR FAVOR, I'LL HAVE MY BEST BACKER YET.
HE'S THE FORMER CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY OR DEPUTY SECRETARY OR SOMETHING.
HE WAS FOUND TO BE CORRUPT AND FORCED TO RESIGN.
HE'S A POLITICIAN!?
And in the cabinet, no less!

Uuurgh!
... WAIT.


Oops!
I DIDN'T SEE YOU LAST NIGHT.
HOW'D YOU KNOW I GOT HEAT STROKE?

IF YOU PILE ON ALL THOSE LAYERS...
...YOU'LL GIVE YOURSELF HEAT STROKE AGAIN.

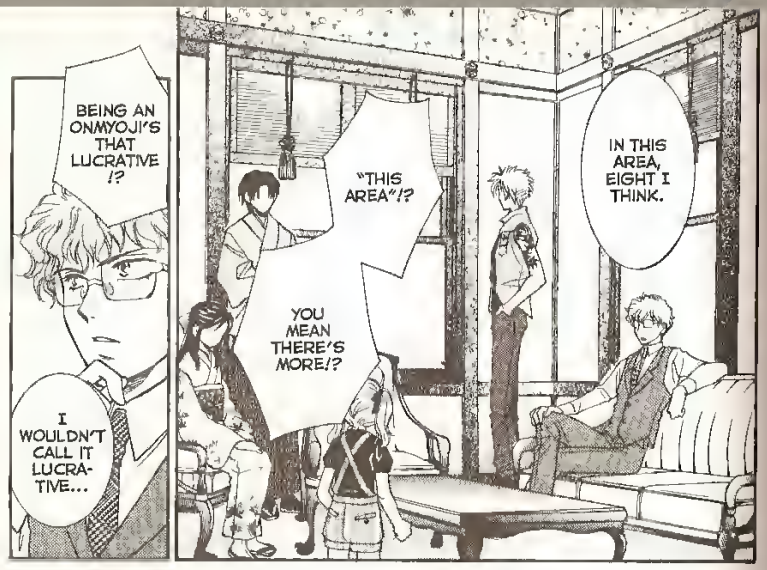

STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
YOU'D BETTER NOT BE HIDING SOMETHING, AYA-SAN!!
HOLD IT!
WE'D BETTER GO BEFORE SHE CHANGES HER MIND!
OH YEAH! THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY SAID SHE'LL MEET US NOW! ♪

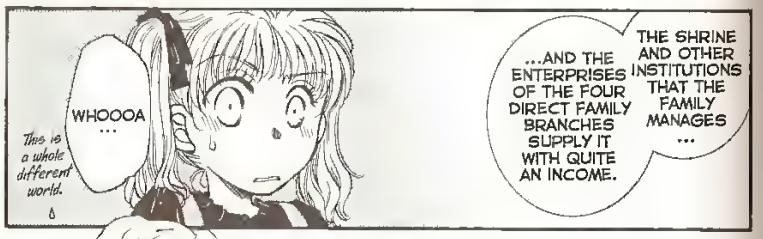

SHE SWALLOWED IT...
...HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER.
REALLY!? WHERE!?

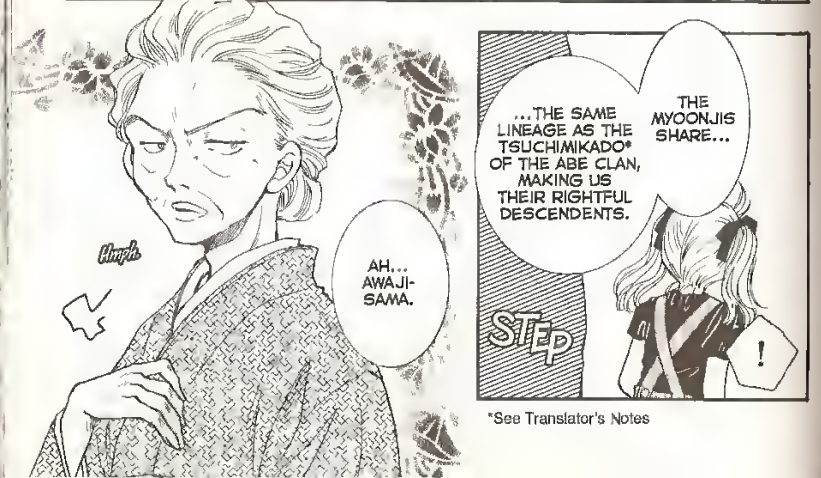
AYA-SAN!!
OH, IT'S AKEO-SAN.

I NO LONGER HAVE THE AUTHORITY.
ORIGINALLY, IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE YOU–
ENOUGH!!
TURN
EXCUSE ME.
NOOO...
Sir!
Uwaaah!
B... BUT...

I'LL BE KILLED IF THIS KEEPS ON!
SAVE ME!
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG!
TALK TO THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY FOR ME!
I WAS ORDERED NOT TO INVOLVE THE HEAD OF THIS FAMILY.
MY HANDS ARE TIED.
YOU CAN KILL MY ADVERSARIES WITH A CURSE BEFORE THEY GET ME!
I WAS FRAMED!
HELP ME AND THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY WILL–
BUT THERE MUST BE SOMETHING YOU CAN DO!
I DON'T WANT TO DIE!!
NO...

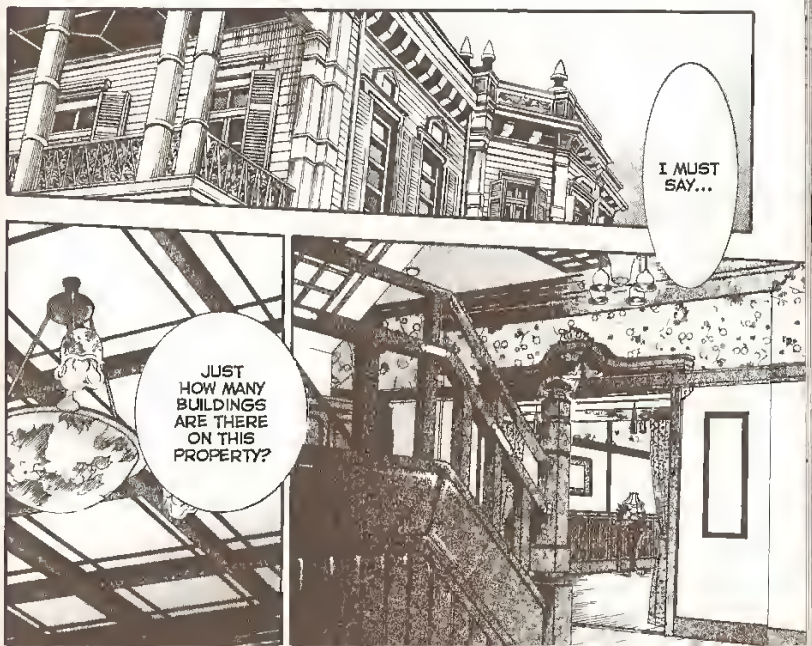


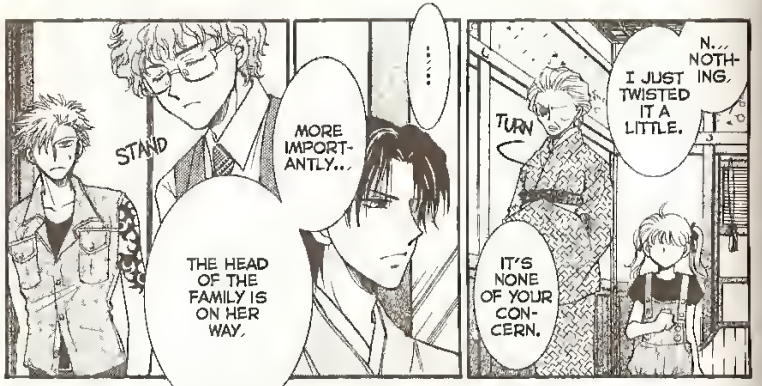

WHOOOA...
This is a whole different world.
...AND THE ENTERPRISES OF THE FOUR DIRECT FAMILY BRANCHES SUPPLY IT WITH QUITE AN INCOME.
THE SHRINE AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS THAT THE FAMILY MANAGES...

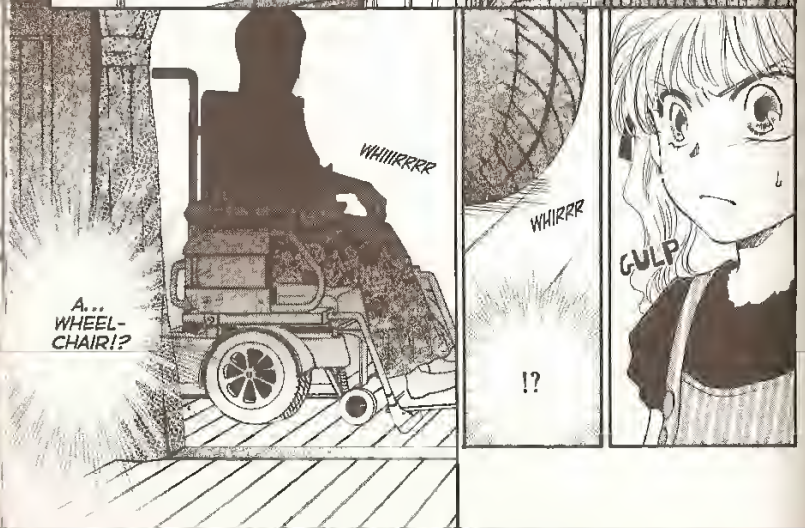


*See Translator's Notes

WHAT DOES HE MEAN BY "NO LONGER"?

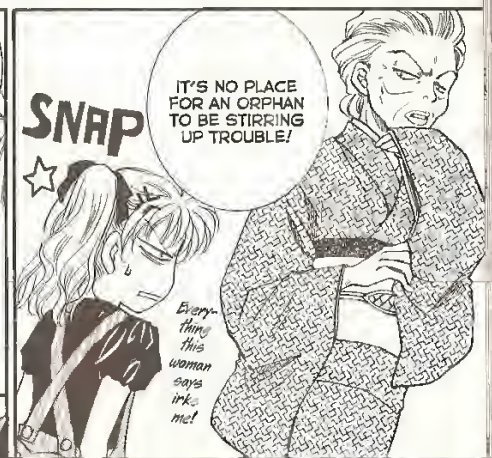


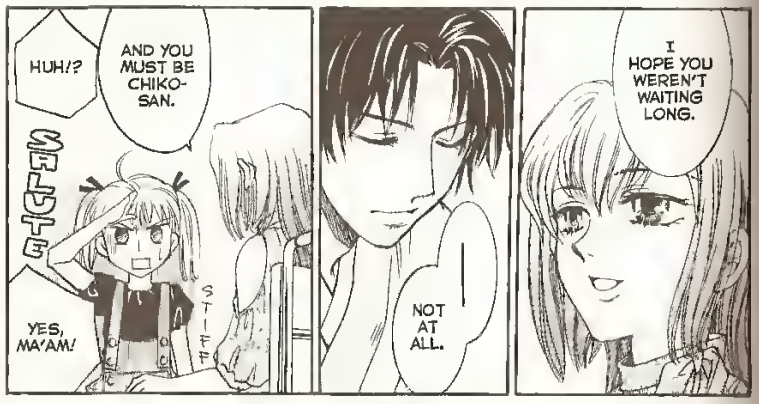

STAND
MORE IMPORT-ANTLY...
THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY IS ON HER WAY.
...!!
TURN
IT'S NONE OF YOUR CON-CERN.
I JUST TWISTED IT A LITTLE.
N...NOTH-ING.


A... WHEEL-CHAIR!?
WHIIIRRRR
WHIIRRR
!?
GULP

BEFORE THE START OF THE MEIJI PERIOD, OUR ONMYO SKILLS... ...WERE OUR MOST VALUABLE SOURCE OF EMPLOY-MENT.
BUT SINCE THE PRACTICE OF ONMYO IN THE POLITICAL SECTOR WAS ABOLISHED...
...THE ONMYOJI THAT WORKED AT THE CENTRAL COURT AND THOSE WHO WERE SCATTERED ACROSS THE COUNTRY HAVE BEEN PIVOTAL...
...IN MAINTAINING THE SPIRITUAL BACKBONE OF THIS COUNTRY.
IT'S AN IMPORTANT DUTY TO BE ENTRUSTED WITH.

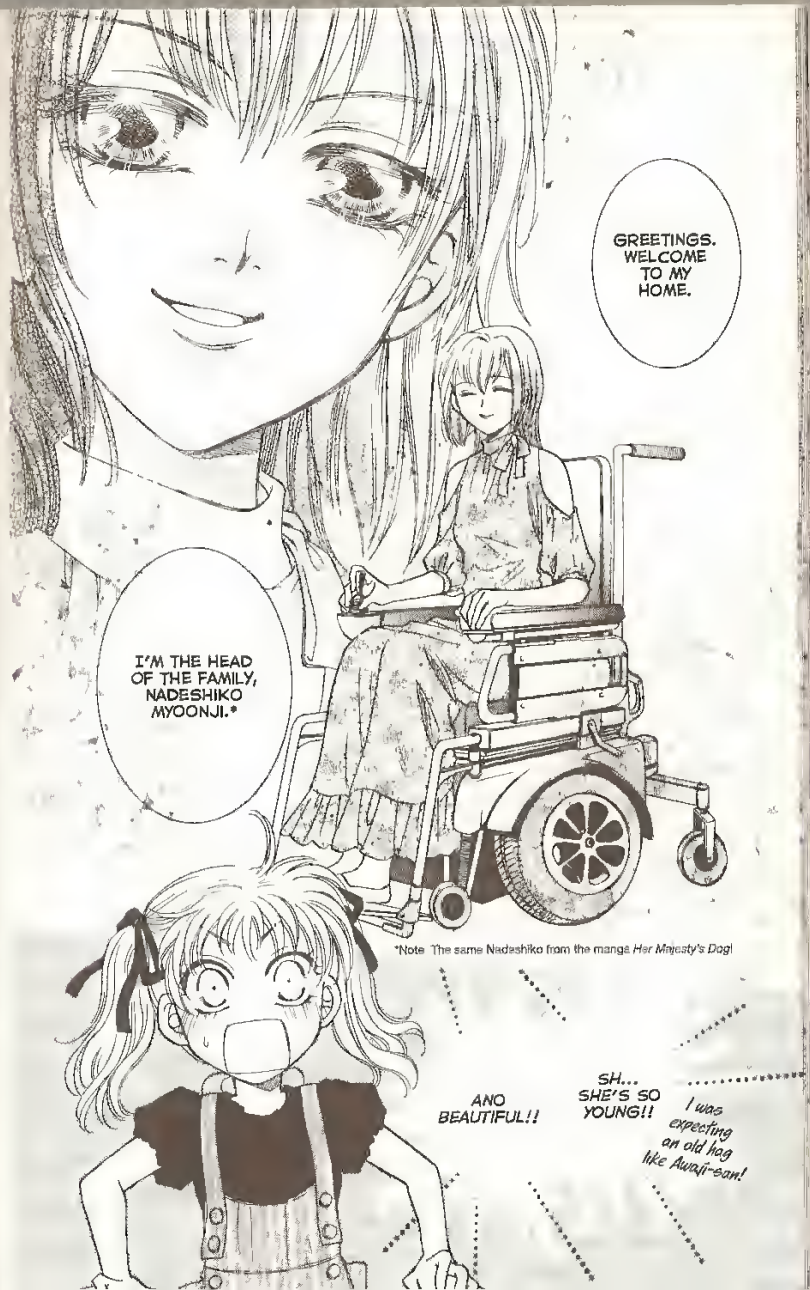
HUH? AWAJI-SAN.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR ARM?
!


SNAP
IT'S NO PLACE FOR AN ORPHAN TO BE STIRRING UP TROUBLE!
Everything this woman says irks me!


HUH!?
AND YOU MUST BE CHIKO-SAN.
SALUTE
STIFF
YES, MA'AM!
NOT AT ALL.
I HOPE YOU WEREN'T WAITING LONG.

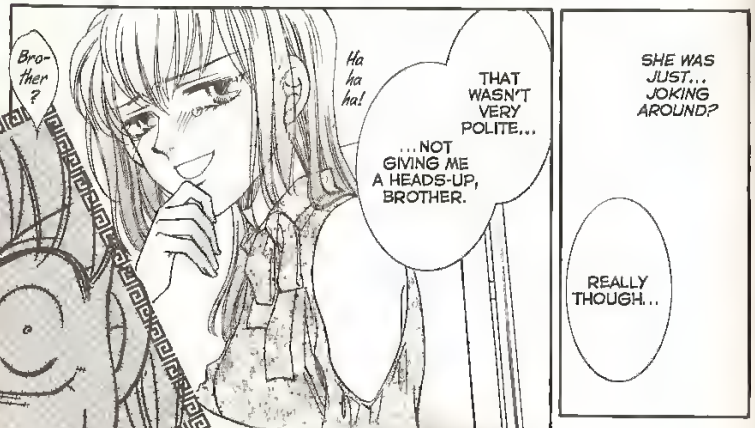
AW, SHUCKS!
I'M NOT THAT CUTE...
Hee hee!
YOU'RE AN AD-ORABLE LITTLE GIRL.
THE RUMORS WERE RIGHT.

HOLD ON A MINUTE!
TUG
I SWEAR ...
HOW NAUGHTY OF YOU, AKEO-SAN.
THIS SUDDEN MOOD SWING CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING ...
BRINGING A GIRL LIKE HER INTO MY HOUSE.
HUH!?
WHAT THE...!?

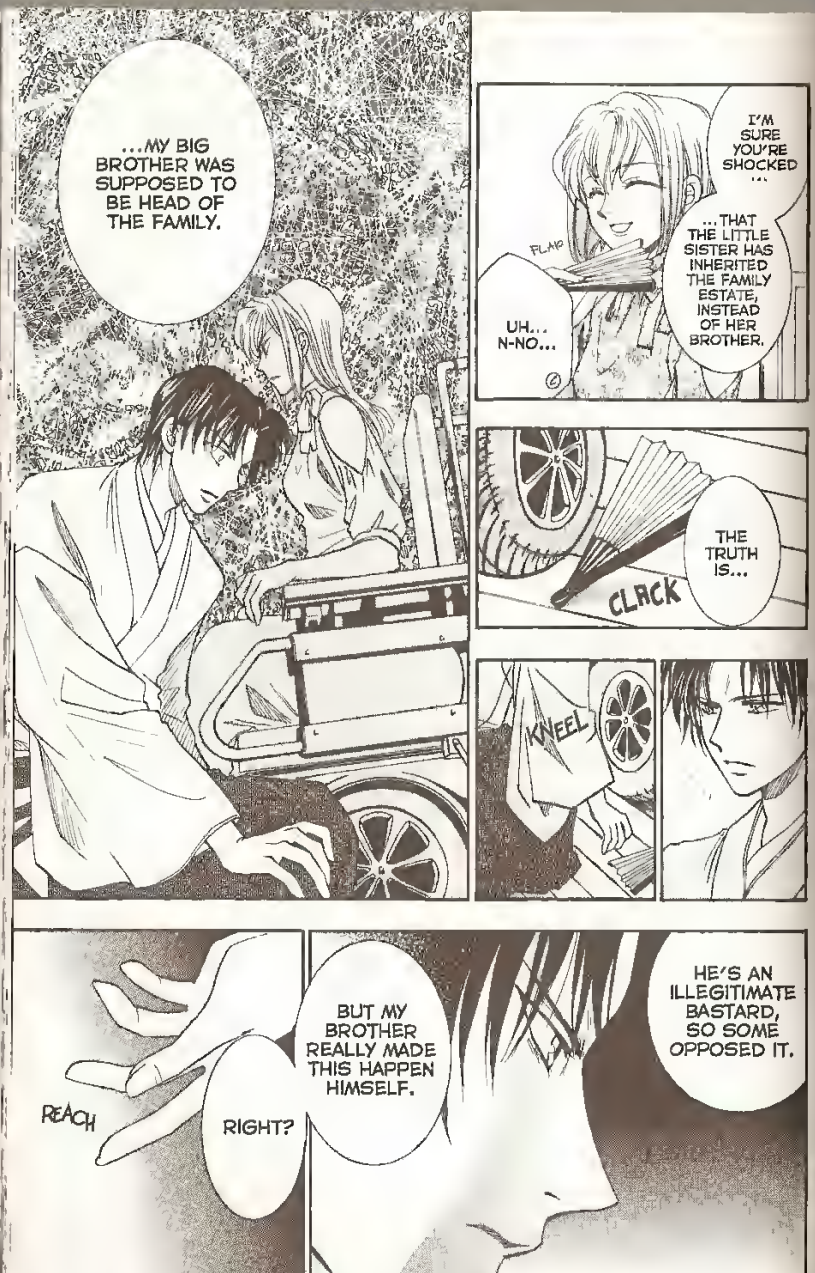

GREETINGS. WELCOME TO MY HOME.
I'M THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY, NADESHIKO MYOONJI.*
*Note The same Nadeshiko from the manga Her Majesty's Dog!
SH... SHE'S SO YOUNG!!
I was expecting an old hag like Awaji-san!
AND BEAUTIFUL!!

HYUCK
HYUCK
HYUCK
JUMP
SUCH POOR ACTING...
...GIVES ME...
...THE CHILLS.

HA HA HA!
YOU GOT ME, YOU GOT ME!
Huh?
What is this?
YOU'RE SO CUTE, HOW QUICKLY YOU CATCH ONTO THINGS!
HA HA HA!


Brother?
Ha ha ha!
THAT WASN'T VERY POLITE...
...NOT GIVING ME A HEADS-UP, BROTHER.
SHE WAS JUST... JOKING AROUND?
REALLY THOUGH...

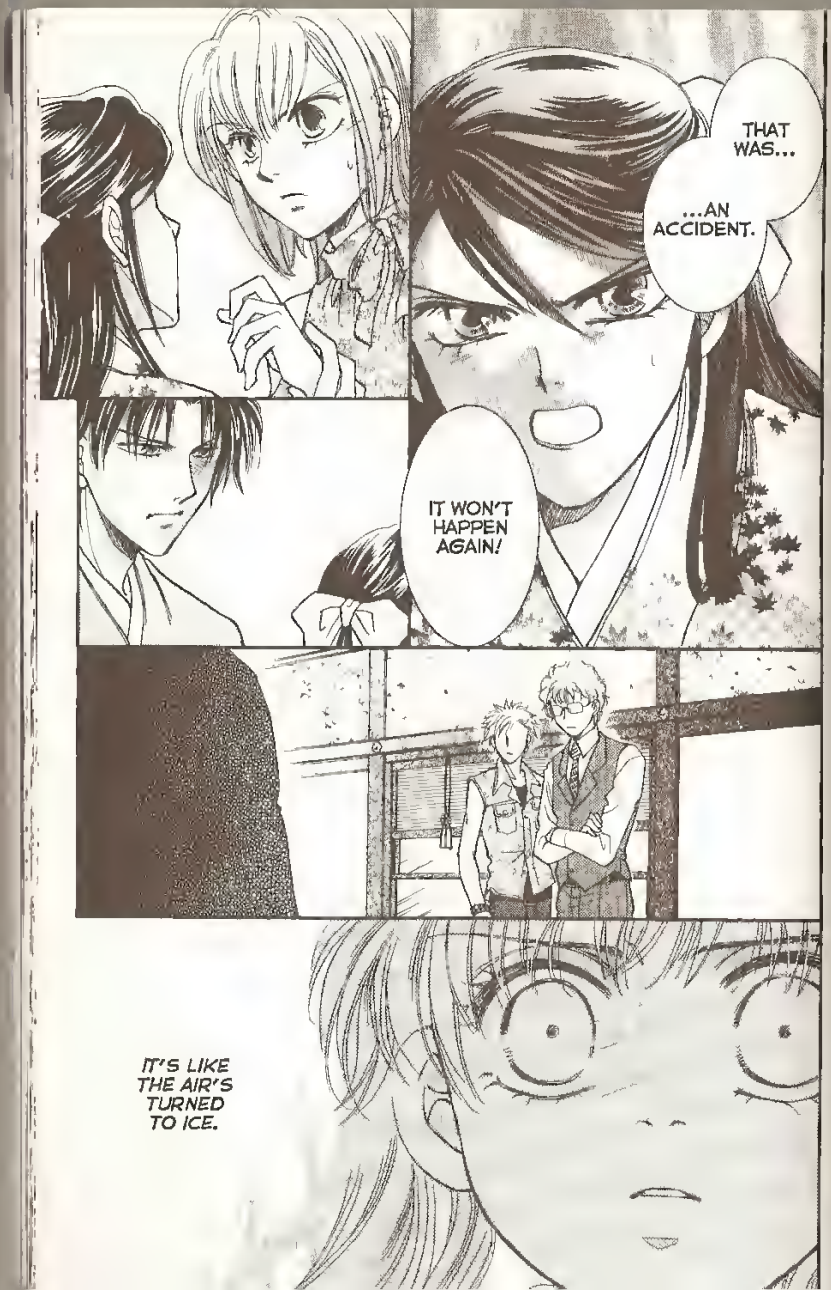
...DESTINED LOVER, ATTACHED TO THE OTHER SIDE OF HIS THREAD!
I KNEW IT! THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY REALLY IS THE MASTER'S...
YOU'LL MAKE ME...
...JEALOUS.
YOU'RE MAKING ME SICK.
WHISPER


...MY BIG BROTHER WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HEAD OF THE FAMILY.
I'M SURE YOU'RE SHOCKED ...
...THAT THE LITTLE SISTER HAS INHERITED THE FAMILY ESTATE, INSTEAD OF HER BROTHER.
FLAP
UH... N-NO...
THE TRUTH IS...
CLACK
KNEEL
HE'S AN ILLEGITIMATE BASTARD, SO SOME OPPOSED IT.
BUT MY BROTHER REALLY MADE THIS HAPPEN HIMSELF.
REACH
RIGHT?

...THAT MEANS THE MASTER...
...IS THIS PROMINENT FAMILY'S...
NAGUMO WAS HIS MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME.
IF THEY'RE BROTHER AND SISTER...
...AND HE'S OLDER THAN HER, THEN...
B... BROTHER!?
YOU'RE RELATED!?
HUH?
THEN WHY IS HIS LITTLE SISTER HEAD OF THE FAMILY?
...PRECIOUS OLDEST SON!!
ORIGINALLY, IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE YOU-
I NO LONGER HAVE THAT AUTHORITY.
THIS WORLD JUST GETS MORE AND MORE COMPLI-CATED!

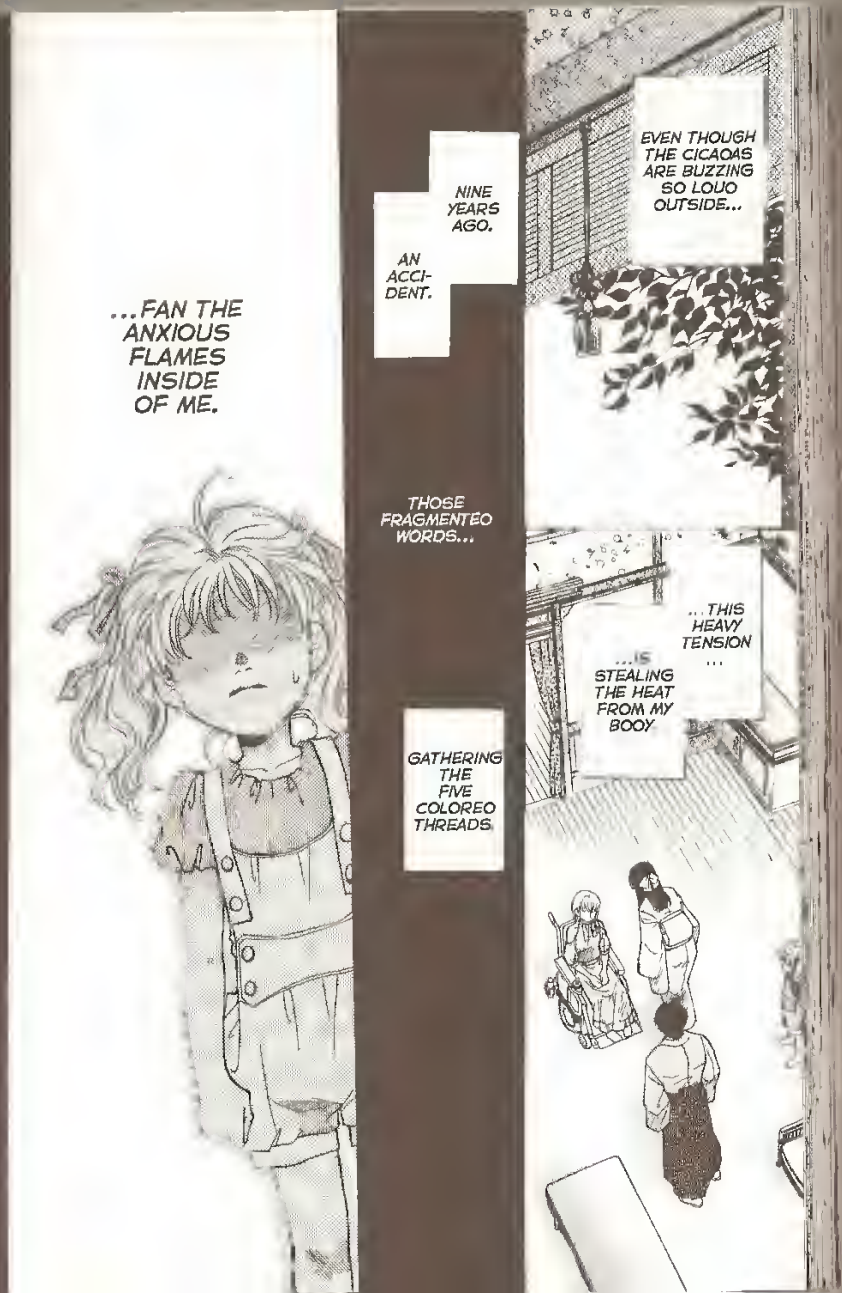
THADUMP
NINE YEARS AGO...?
WAFT
YOU'RE HOPING TO...
...DO THE EXACT SAME THING AGAIN, AREN'T YOU?
VOOM
...YOU GATHERED THE FIVE COLORED THREADS...
WHILE IN TOKYO AND AWAY FROM OUR PRYING EYES...
TOUCH
!

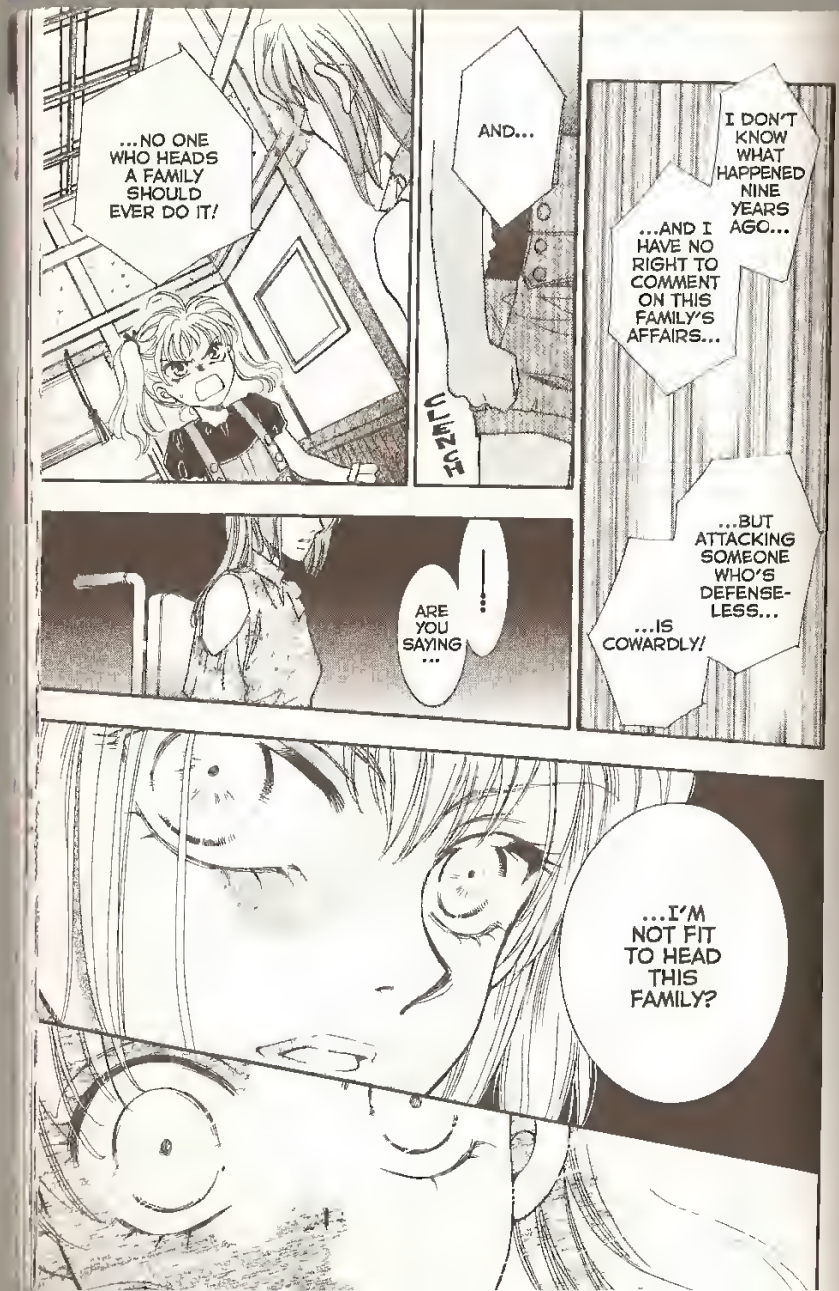
I'LL NEVER FORGET...
...WHAT HAPPENED THAT DAY NINE YEARS AGO.
SCRATCH


THAT WAS...
...AN ACCIDENT.
IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN!
IT'S LIKE THE AIR'S TURNED TO ICE.

...IN HOPES OF DOING YOU-KNOW-WHAT AGAIN...
MADAM!

HMPH.
FINE.
RUSTLE
SNAP
I'M JUST SAYING I'LL EXPOSE YOUR TRUE SIDE SOON ENOUGH!
WHAT!?
AS FAR AS YOUR LETTING AN OUTSIDER SPIN SHIROGANE WITHOUT MY PERMISSION...
IN ANY CASE...
...I'LL BE NICE, AND KEEP YOUR PUNISHMENT LIGHT.

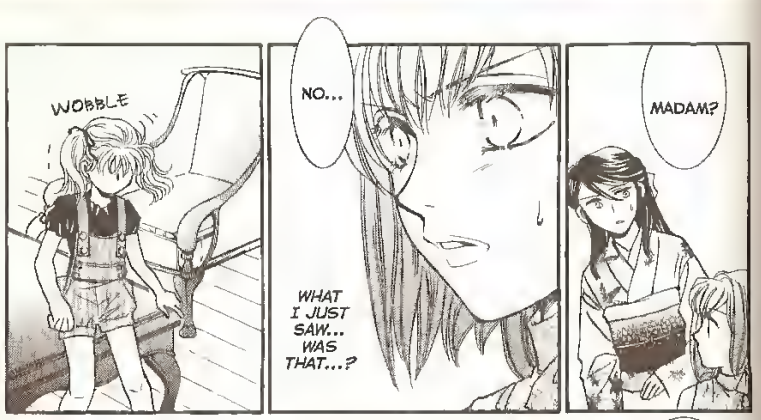

...FAN THE ANXIOUS FLAMES INSIDE OF ME.
NINE YEARS AGO.
AN ACCI-DENT.
THOSE FRAGMENTED WORDS...
GATHERING THE FIVE COLORED THREADS.
EVEN THOUGH THE CICADAS ARE BUZZING SO LOUD OUTSIDE...
...THIS HEAVY TENSION ...
...IS STEALING THE HEAT FROM MY BODY

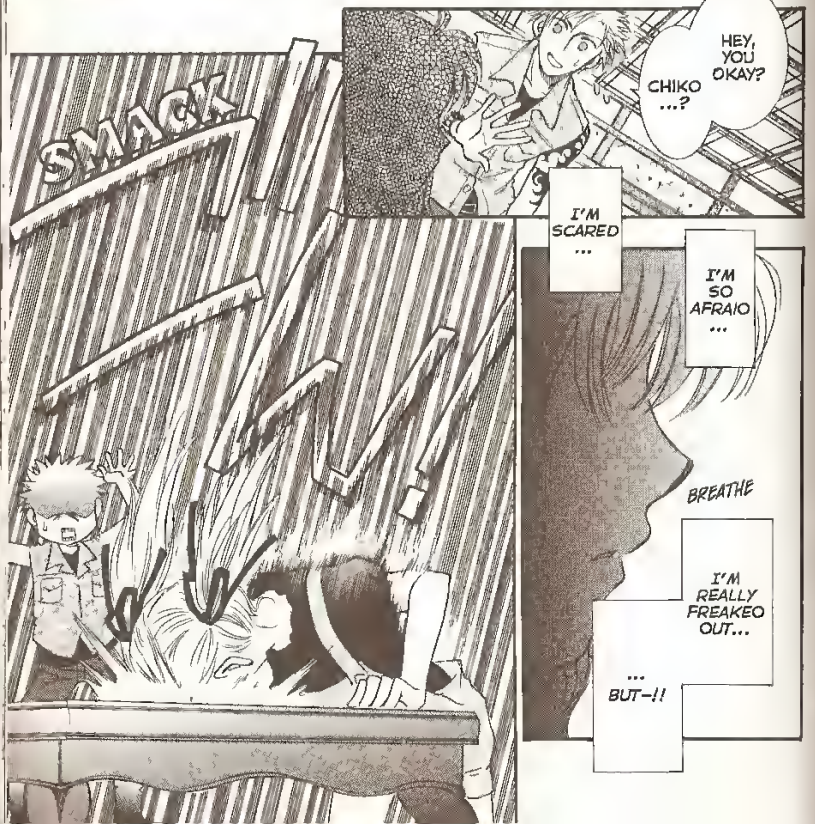

...NO ONE WHO HEADS A FAMILY SHOULD EVER DO IT!
AND...
CLENCH
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED NINE YEARS AGO...
...AND I HAVE NO RIGHT TO COMMENT ON THIS FAMILY'S AFFAIRS...
...BUT ATTACKING SOMEONE WHO'S DEFENSE-LESS...
...IS COWARDLY!
ARE YOU SAYING ...!
...I'M NOT FIT TO HEAD THIS FAMILY?

THE MASTER DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG!
I FORMED THE PACT WITH IT!
WAIT!!
I FOUND SHIROGANE ON MY OWN!
BUT...!
TURN
HE IS STILL GUILTY OF NEGLIGENCE.
YOU'LL DO ANYTHING TO EMBARRASS HIM!
YOU'RE JUSTIFYING IT ANY WAY YOU CAN.
YOU'RE JUST FINDING FAULT WITH EVERYTHING HE DOES!

I LIKE...
...SMART GIRLS.
I'M SCARED...
THROB
SO SCARED...
I CAN'T... MOVE!
THROB
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
I CAN'T BREATHE...
PURE FEAR...
...IS FLOODING MY VERY CENTER!
HUH!?
WHAT THE...?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!?

IT'S GOING TO EAT ME!!
...YOU'LL BE REDUCED TO NOTHING.
OTHER-WISE...
HEY ...
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S ENOUGH?
HUFF
HUFF
NADE-SHIKO-SAN'S AN EXTRA-ORDINARY SPIRIT MEDIUM.
MANIPULAT-ING A SOUL IS CHILD'S PLAY FOR HER.
.....
IF YOU WANT TO SURVIVE IN THIS HOUSE-HOLD...
...YOU HAVE TO BE CLEVER.

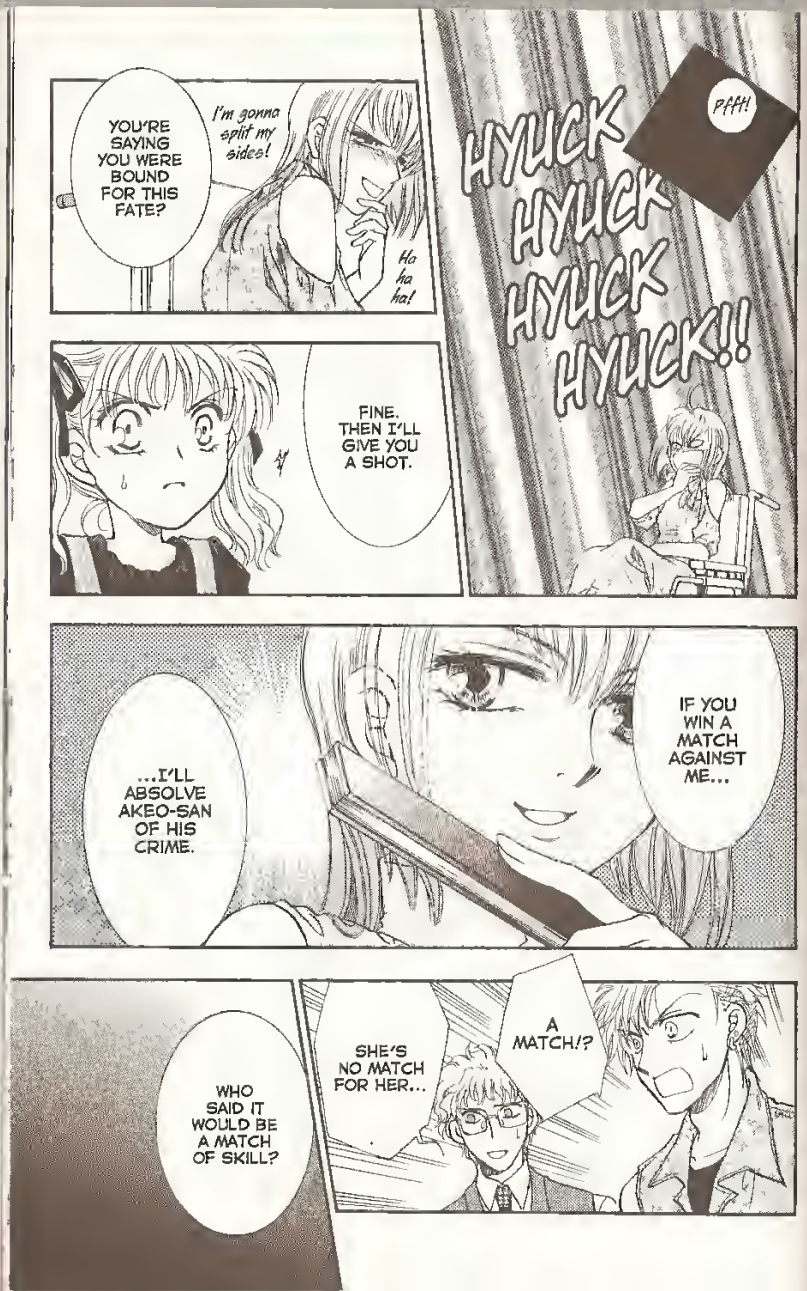

WOBBLE
NO...
WHAT I JUST SAW... WAS THAT...?
MADAM?


SMACK
CHIKO ...?
HEY, YOU OKAY?
I'M SCARED ...
I'M SO AFRAID ...
BREATHE
I'M REALLY FREAKED OUT...
... BUT--!!

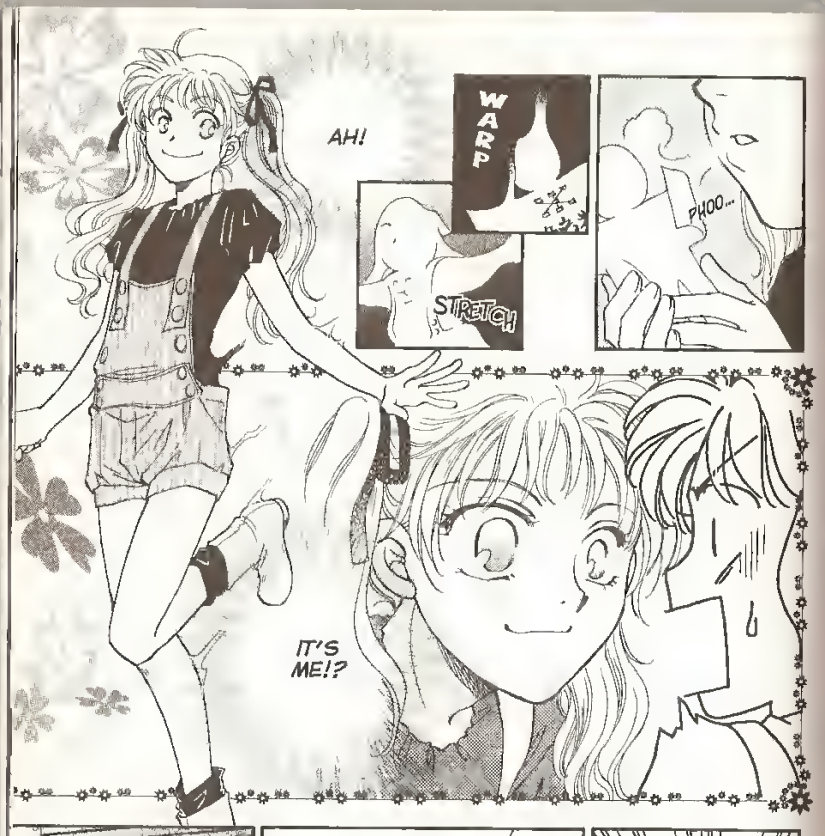
FAZE
!
FREEZE

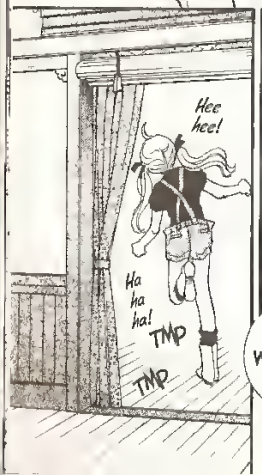
SLAM
MY STRING OF FATE LED ME TO IT!
...HAD TO BE DESTINY!
MY BECOMING SHIROGANE'S SPINNER...
I'M TIRED OF...
...BEING PARALYZED BY FEAR.
...SAID OUR STRINGS OF FATE ARE TIED TOGETHER.
SHIRO-GANE...
THE MASTER...
IT'S NOT THE MASTER'S FAULT AT ALL!
AND IF YOU CALL THAT STUPIDITY...
...THEN I DON'T WANT TO BE "CLEVER".
IF I CAN'T PROTECT THOSE I CARE ABOUT...

I...
CHIKO!?
VRRRR
to she broken ?
JUMP
THROb
THROb
I'VE NEVER HEARD ANYTHING THAT STUPID IN MY LIFE!!


YOU'RE SAYING YOU WERE BOUND FOR THIS FATE?
I'm gonna split my sides!
Ha ha ha!
HYUCK HYUCK HYUCK HYUCK!!
PFFF!
FINE. THEN I'LL GIVE YOU A SHOT.
IF YOU WIN A MATCH AGAINST ME...
...I'LL ABSOLVE AKEO-SAN OF HIS CRIME.
WHO SAID IT WOULD BE A MATCH OF SKILL?
SHE'S NO MATCH FOR HER...
A MATCH!?

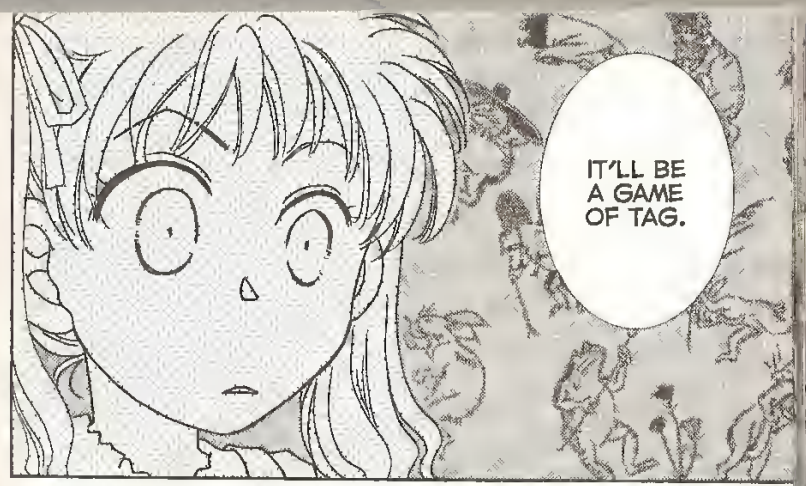
...THEN THERE'S NO CURE FOR WHAT I AM!!
BADUM!
Pfft ha ha ha!!
Is that anything to be proud of?
She didn't hesitate

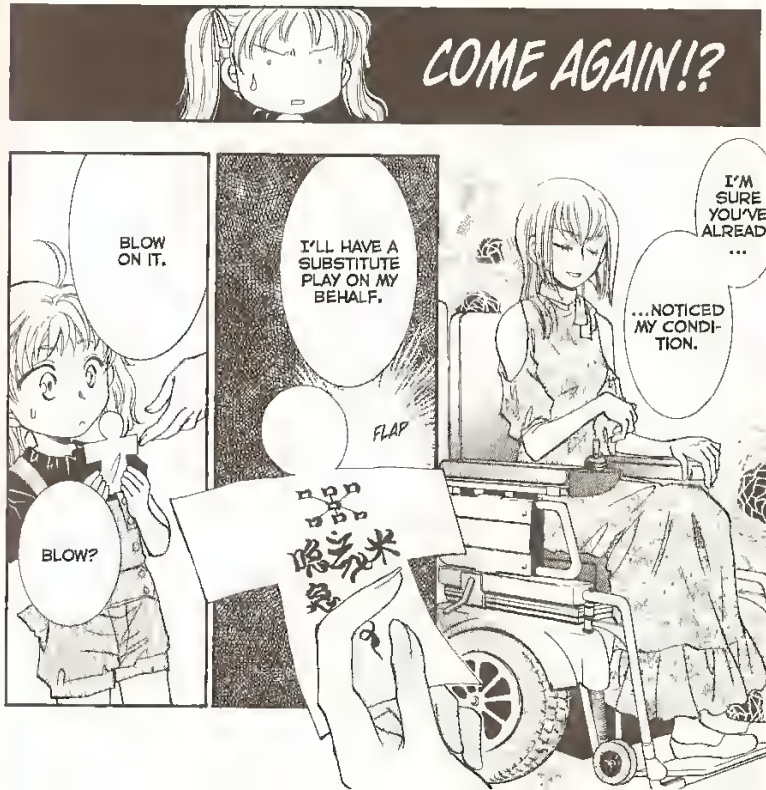

AH!
WARP
STRETCH
PHOO...
IT'S ME!?

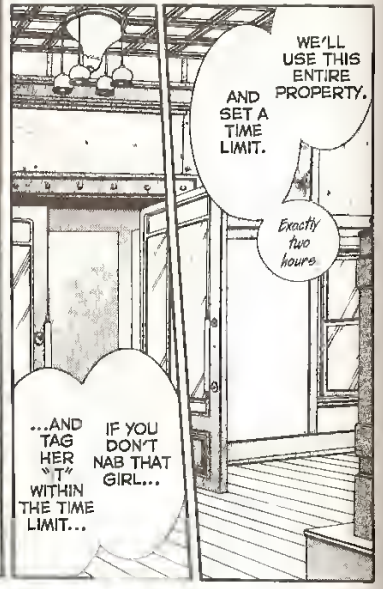

Hee hee!
Ha ha ha!
TMP
TMP

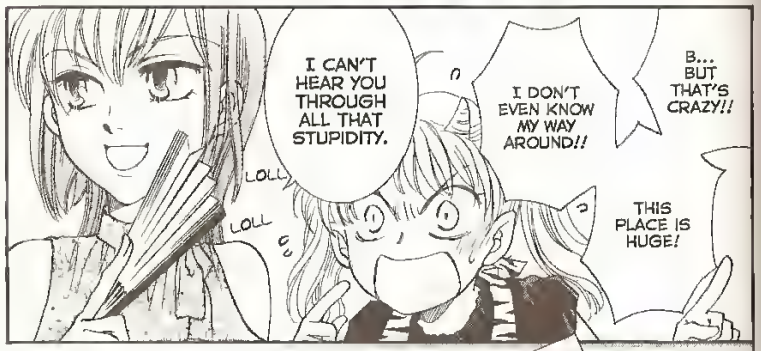
TMP
TAG, YOU'RE IT!
HEE HEE! ♡
WHAT!?

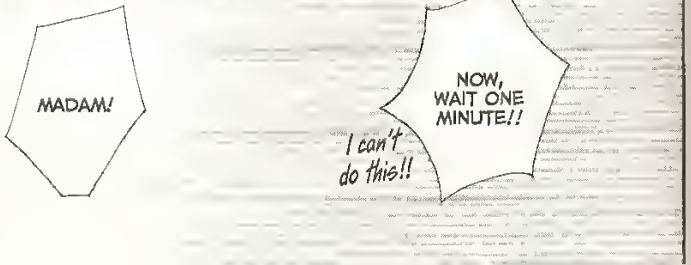
SMACK
Yowch!

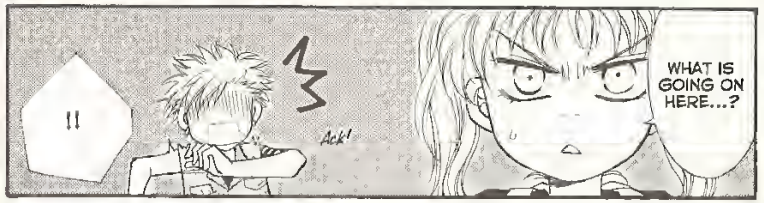

IT'LL BE A GAME OF TAG.

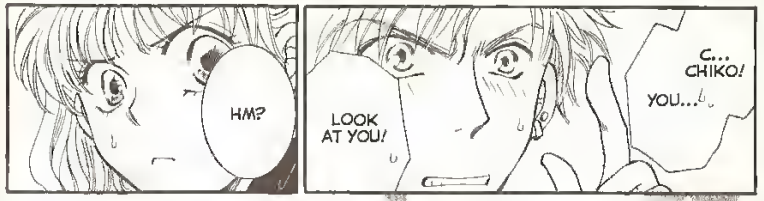

COME AGAIN!?
BLOW ON IT.
BLOW?
I'LL HAVE A SUBSTITUTE PLAY ON MY BEHALF.
FLAP
I'M SURE YOU'VE ALREADY ...
...NOTICED MY CONDITION.


WE'LL USE THIS ENTIRE PROPERTY.
AND SET A TIME LIMIT.
Exactly two hours.
IF YOU DON'T NAB THAT GIRL...
...AND TAG HER "IT" WITHIN THE TIME LIMIT...

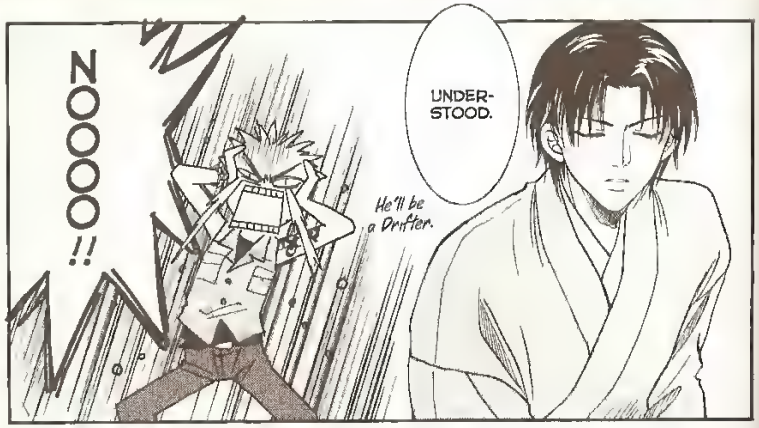


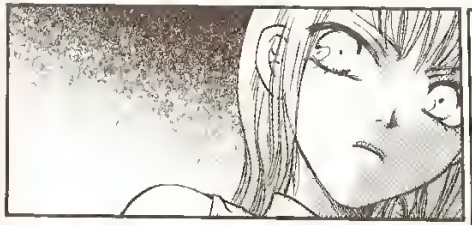


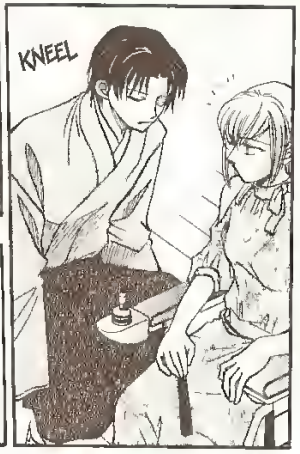


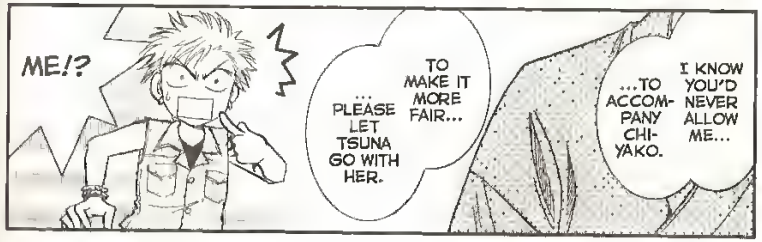


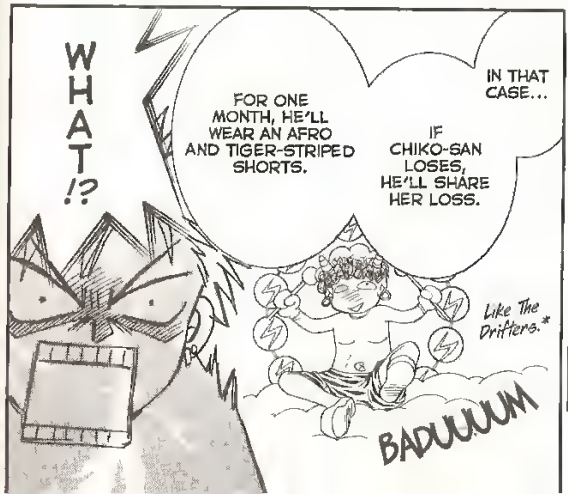
*See Translator's Notes

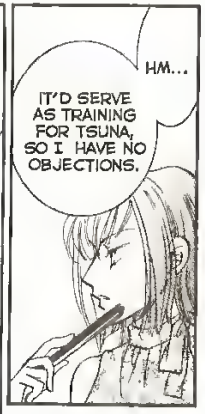






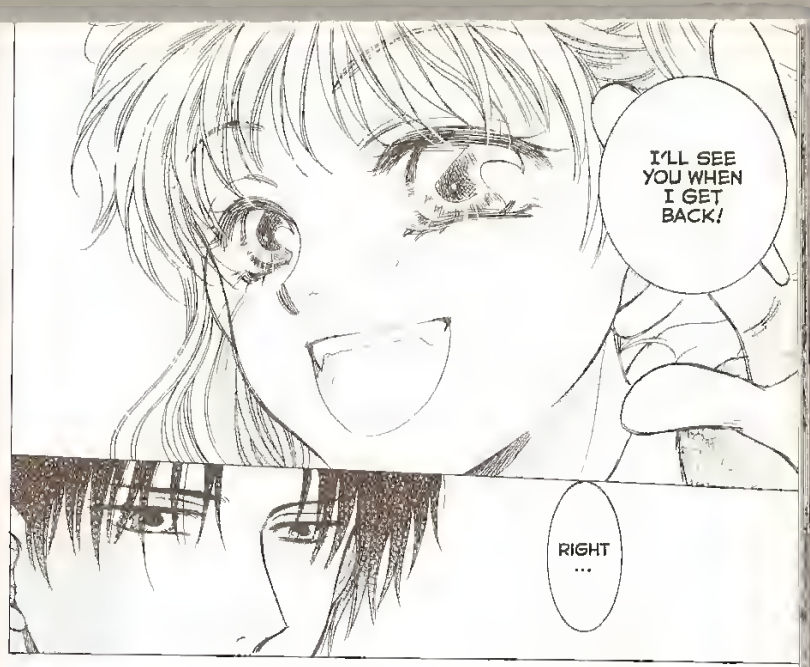



WHAT!?
FOR ONE MONTH, HE'LL WEAR AN AFRO AND TIGER-STRIPED SHORTS.
IN THAT CASE...
IF CHIKO-SAN LOSES, HE'LL SHARE HER LOSS.
Like The Drifters.*
BADUUUUM



*See Translator's Notes

TELL THEM TO TRACK IT DOWN AND EXTERMINATE IT.
A DEMON...
...HAS GOTTEN LOSE.
NOTIFY EVERY ABLE BODY ON THE PREMISES!
ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL CHIYAKO!?
THIS WAS HER PLAN ALL ALONG!
WHAT !?


I'LL SEE YOU WHEN I GET BACK!
RIGHT ...

Then just win! Win, already!!
I don't wanna look like The Drifters!
Noooo!!
AWAJI.
PAISE
I'll never get married now...

OFF RECORDING

Hello, it's Mick Takeuchi. Volume 3 of "Bound Beauty" is out! Thank you so much!

The Master is on the cover this time. I'd actually been planning to have him grace the cover a few volumes from now, but in the face of deadlines and production schedules, things happen... I mean, the illustration I'd originally done for the magazine installment of Chapter 10 was so well-received, we just went with it. He always wears traditional Japanese garb throughout the series, so I was afraid that coloring it would look drab, but giving it an Onmyoji twist really saved it, I think. Since there's no way his whole wardrobe is nothing but kimono and traditional Japanese clothes, I look forward to drawing him in standard modern-day clothing, too.

The Eighth and Ninth Binding chapters were a continuation of the events in the previous volume, which I like to call "the shopping mall arc". I'd never thought about dragging it out like that (heh) but getting to show Chiko-san's early days of growing a backbone, and her first encounter with the Master, got me really revved up to go on with it. While drawing the chapters, I visited a lot of real shopping malls for reference. It's so interesting to go into all sorts of different shops! All of my trips give me a good sampling of some high-class gourmet food, too.

In the Tenth and Eleventh Binding chapters, we saw the advent of the Kyoto family arc! The head of the family, A.K.A. Nadeshiko-san, was also a short-lived comedy relief character in my previous work "Her Majesty's Dog". I was sort of afraid that people who dislike these kind of "spin off" antics would be repulsed by my including her here, but I received only the most positive of responses, and it really put my heart at ease (heh!). The moment I'd decided that "Bound Beauty" would involve the Onmyoji culture, I knew she'd be making an appearance.

Actually, when "Her Majesty's Dog" ended, I didn't think I'd be able to serialize another story so soon, so I'd actually considered writing a short one-shot that had Nadeshiko-san as the main character (ha!). Now it feels like "Bound Beauty" was the main stage, and she only made a guest appearance in "Her Majesty's Dog" despite the order of releases.

Since she's a very easy character to put into action, I plan to have her be a key person in stirring up the Tyers, and expanding on this sibling rivalry we have seen. It's going to be so exciting!! And so, her story will go on (sorryyy). As a brief forecast of events to come, the Master's secret and Chiko's past will come to light...I think (heh).

So I hope you all look forward to the next volume, too! Please let me hear your impressions and whatnot!!

I hope everybody has fun-filled days to enjoy!

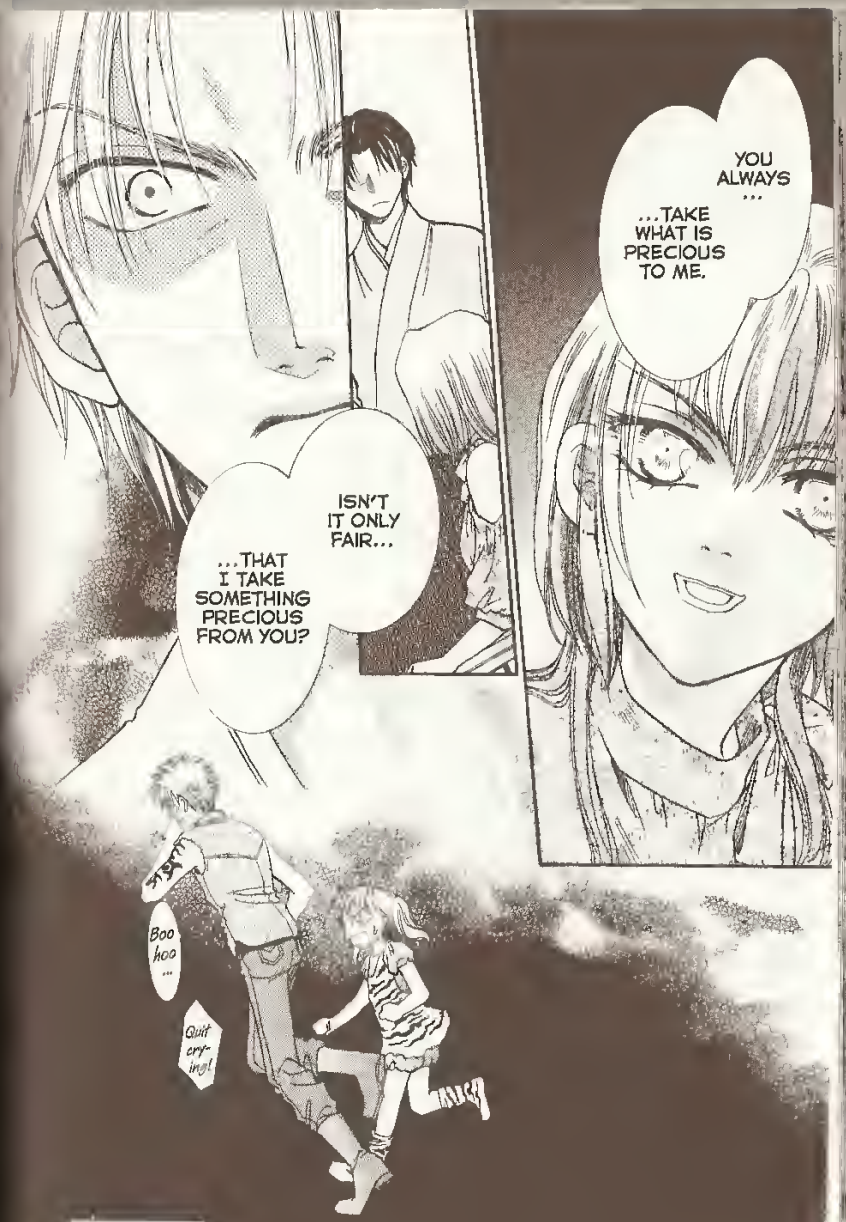
2007 MICK

OFFICIAL WEB SITE
[MIX★SPACE]
http://id74.net

I look forward to your letters. ♥

Go! Comi
28047 Dorothy Drive, Suite #200
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

SPECIAL THANKS
TAKI TAKI, MU-CHAN, HI, TAN, DOKUMI, MITSUKO, KAMINA, K.SAITOH, CLITAKA,
MY FAMILY... , and YOU!


YOU ALWAYS ...
...TAKE WHAT IS PRECIOUS TO ME.
ISN'T IT ONLY FAIR...
...THAT I TAKE SOMETHING PRECIOUS FROM YOU?
Boo hoo ...
Quit cry-ing!
Eleventh Binding /end

A Day In the Life of Aya-San

AYA HIMURO (AGE 23) IS AN AQUARIUS WITH TYPE B BLOOD.
HE'S THE TYERS' PERFECT HOUSEWIFE.
Did you hear about Kawakami-san's wife!?
The supermarket in District 2 gives out three per customer!
...TO KEEPING UP WITH THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD'S LATEST GOSSIP...
FROM COOKING AND CLEAN-ING...
La!
La la la!
...AND HAS RECENTLY DEVOTED HIMSELF TO MAKING SWEETS.
Gets bored with things quickly
How to Become a Patissier in 3 Days
The Complete Sweets Book
...HE'LL STIR UP DELICIOUS RECIPES ...
...HIS HOUSE-MATES ARE NOT IM-PRESSED.
You're looking at it.
WHAT ABOUT DINNER?
HOW-EVER ...
TMP
TMP

Chiko's Assertion

EVEN THOUGH SHE'S IN THE BODY OF A CHILD...
...HER SOUL IS SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD.
CHIKO, A.K.A. CHIYAKO GOTO (AGE 17) ...
...IS AN ARIES, WITH TYPE O BLOOD AND AN AFFINITY FOR OMELETS OVER RICE.
...I'LL NEVER FINISH SCHOOL !!
I'M LUCKY IT'S SUMMER BREAK, BUT IF I DON'T GET MY REGULAR BODY BACK...
What happened to my school uniform!?
WHAT GIVES!? EVER SINCE CHAPTER 1...
...I HAVEN'T GONE TO SCHOOL ONCE!
I guess I could stay like this for a while.
On second thought ...
DID YOU DO ALL YOUR SUMMER HOMEWORK?

HE REALLY IS AN EXCEPTIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT.
EXCEPT FOR ONE THING ...
AND OFF INTO DREAM-LAND BEFORE MID-NIGHT.
CLUNK
Wait, what's that sound?
THEN, AFTER A LITTLE WEIGHT TRAINING, IT'S INTO THE TUB.
Phew...
Like he's saying, "Touch me and you die."
HE PASSES HIMSELF OFF AS A GANGSTA WANNABE.

So much space to work with...

A Day In the Life of Tsuna

TSUNA, A.K.A. HIROTSUNA TACHIBANA (AGE 18) IS A TAURUS WITH TYPE A BLOOD AND AN AFFINITY FOR MEAT ON THE GRILL, ESPECIALLY THE FATTY PARTS.
HIS DAYS FLY BY.
OM, ALL PERVAD-ING ONE!
AFTER JOGGING TEN MILES ...
...HE PRAC-TICES HIS SKILLS.
HE ATTENDS EVERY CLASS REGULARLY ...
... AND GETS EXCELLENT MARKS IN SCIENCE.
THEN HE GOES TO SCHOOL.
THOUGH IT'S SUMMER BREAK NOW.
Hurry up and finish your meal!
Oh, Potrasche*...
AT HOME, HE EATS DINNER ...
...AND WATCHES ANIMAL PROGRAMS ON T.V.
And picks up girls or gets hit on.
WHEN HE'S NOT WORK-ING...
...HE GOES TO THE ARCADE WITH FRIENDS OR SHOPS.

*See Translator's Notes

Isora's Achilles' Heel

Eastern Music CD Corner
YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT!?
YOU REALLY DID RELEASE A CD!
Wooow...
OOOOH!
ISORA SAKURAGI (AGE 21) IS A PISCES WITH TYPE A BLOOD.
SHE'S A BRILLIANT KOTO PER-FORMER.
Isora Sakuragi
WHY WOULD YOU WANT MY AUTO-GRAPH?
WHAT?
CAN I HAVE YOUR AUTO-GRAPH?
I'm gonna buy this.
Thrilled to know the person who made the CD
PLEASE ?
SHE'S MORE SHY THAN EXPECTED.
Can you write on it "To Chiko-chan"!?
STOP THAAAT!
NOOOO!!

What Makes the Master Happy

HE'S A POWERFUL ONMYOJI WHO IS RARELY SEEN THESE DAYS.
HAVING STUDIED AND TRAINED TO BE AN ONMYOJI FOR SO LONG, HE IS NAIVE ABOUT THE REAL WORLD.
THE MASTER, A.K.A. AKEO NAGUMO (AGE 28).
A SCOR-PION WITH TYPE AB BLOOD.
He usually doesn't let him eat it
...micro-wave meals to be eaten in my presence!
...CUP RAMEN.
I will not allow...
GIDDY
GIDDY
SO ONE OF HIS GUILTY PLEASURES IS...
BLOOP
BLOOP
PEEL
Three minutes later...
He forgot the miso.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Pg. 29 – Mitsuo Aida
Mitsuo Aida is a Japanese calligrapher and poet. He is famous for his sincere and down-to-earth calligraphy poems, which are written in his endearingly child-like handwriting.

Pg. 58 – *kimon* and back *kimon*
The kimon is the traditionally unlucky part of buildings that faces northeast. Demolishing both it and its far-end equivalent would definitely get rid of any bad luck.

Pg. 117 – demons and beans
Chiko is referring to the Setsubun "spring cleaning" custom. Giving the Western "out with the old, in with the new" concept a more "out with the evil, in with the good fortune" sense, family members throw beans outside the house to banish the evil. Sometimes a family member wearing an ogre mask serves as the "demon target". The rest of the family throws the beans at him or her to banish the evil.

Pg. 127 – *shikigami*
A kind of spirit summoned to serve an Onmyoji. They are often portrayed as child-sized demons, though they can take many different forms, both human and animal. They can be used to possess or even cause bodily harm to an Onmyoji's enemy.

Pg.147 – Tsuchimikado of the Abe clan
The Tsuchimikado were a group of Onmyoji trained under the school of Shinto. They worked for the Imperial Court.

Pg. 176 – "Tag, you're a demon!"
In the Japanese equivalent of "Tag" the person who is called "It" is actually called a demon. Poor Chiko has been given not only the demon's title, but also its body!

Pg. 178 – The Drifters
The Drifters was a famous comedy group in Japan that was active mainly in the 1970s. One of their most memorable skits involved dressing up like the traditional demon with horns, a tiger-striped loincloth, and afro hair.

Pg. 186 – Patrasche
This is the name of the hero dog character in the classic tale, "A Dog of Flanders". It was adapted into a Japanese cartoon called "My Patrasche".

SHE GOES TO SLEEP WITH STUFFED ANIMALS.
You got a problem with that?
NADESHIKO MYOONJI (AGE 22). A LEO WITH TYPE O BLOOD, SHE HEADS THE FAMILY OF ONMYO.
DESPITE HER HARSH PERSONALITY, SHE LOVES CUTE THINGS.
And sweet things, and possibly shojo manga, too
...THEY'RE NOT ORDINARY STUFFED ANIMALS.
GRUNCH
GYAAAH!!
SLASH
SLICE
SAVE ME...!!
N... NO MORE
NADE-SHIKO-CHAN!
AND OF COURSE ...
Heh heh heh...
EEP!
TWINKLE
Wondering who this perv is?
If you're interested, go and read "Her Majesty's Dog"!!
Shameless plug